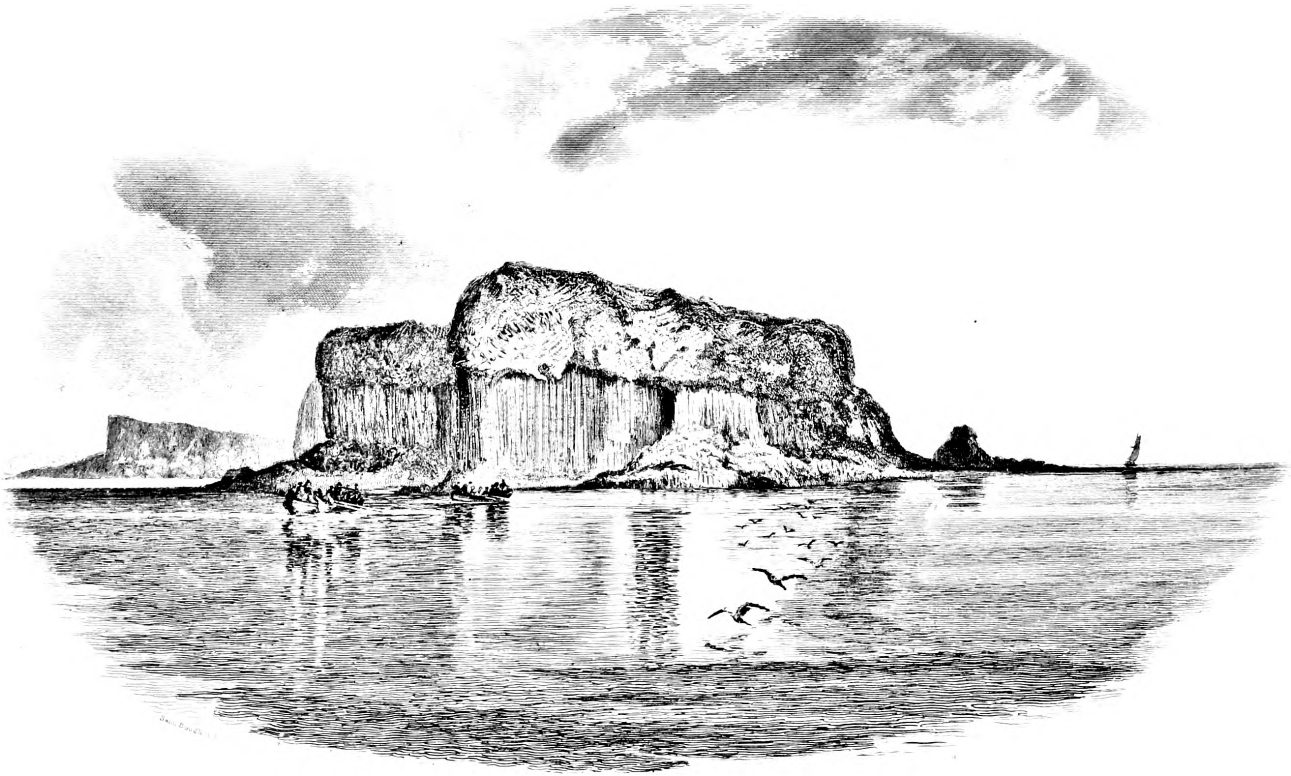

Highland Route.

No III.

OBAN

TO

Staffa & Iona

by

The Sound of Mull and Tobermory

With Notices of the Geology and Natural History of the District and Authentic Information for Tourists as to Conveyances &c &c

BY

WILLIAM KEDDIE

Secretary to the Philosophical Society of Glasgow and Lecturer on Natural Science in the Free Church College Glasgow.

WITH MAP AND NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS.

Entered in Stationers Hall

Glasgow

Maclure and Macdonald

Liverpool Lithographers to The Queen Manchester

LONDON.

CONTENTS.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

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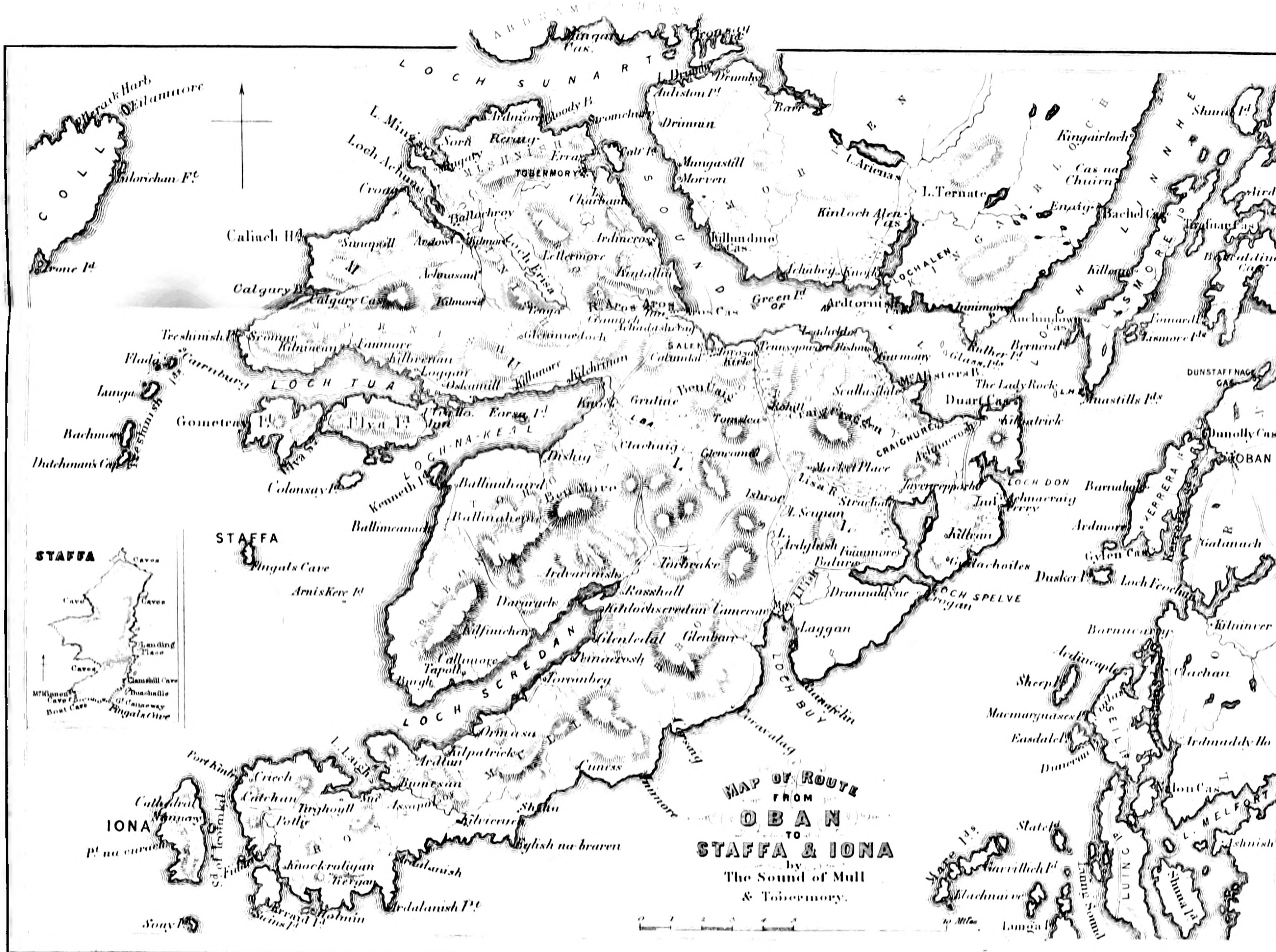
MAP OF ROUTE
FROM
OBAN
TO
STAFFA & IONA
by
The Sound of Mull
& Tobermory.
LOCH SUNART
SOUND OF MULL
LOCH TUA
LOCH-NA-KEAL
LOCH SCREDAN
LOCH BUY
LOCH SPELVE
LOCH DON
TOBERMORY
OBAN
STAFFA
IONA
COLL
Fingals Cave
Caliach Hd.
Gometray Id.
Ulva Id.
Colonsay Id.
Staffa
Caves
Landing Place
Boat Cave
Fingals Cave
Lismore Id.
Kerrera Id.
Duart Cas.
Dunstaffnage Cas.
Dunolly Cas.
Craignure
Salen
Aros
Morven
Kingairloch
L. Ternate
L. Arienas
Lochalen
Shuna Id.
L. Melfort
10 Miles

HIGHLAND ROUTE,

No. II.

OBAN TO STAFFA AND IONA.

"——— And led
To where a turret's airy head,
Slender and steep, and battled round,
O'erlook'd, dark Mull, thy mighty Sound,
Where thwarting tides, with mingled roar,
Part thy swarth hills from Morven's shore."—*Scott.*

"Tradition, be thou mute! Oblivion, throw
Thy veil in mercy o'er the records, hung
Round strath and mountain, stamped by the ancient tongue
On rock and ruin darkening as we go,—
Spots where a word, ghost-like, survives to show
What crimes from hate or desperate love have sprung;
From honour misconceived or fancied wrong,
What feuds, not quenched but fed by mutual woe!
Yet, though a wild, vindictive race, untamed
By civil arts and labours of the pen,
Could gentleness be scorned by those fierce men,
Who, to spread wide the reverence they claimed
For patriarchal occupations, named
Yon towering peaks, Shepherds of Etive Glen?" *
Wordsworth, Sonnet on Sound of Mull.

All tourists in the Highlands, whether coming from the south or returning from the north, pass through Oban; and many of them, attracted by its charming bay, picturesque shores, and mild climate, make this their temporary rendezvous, or their summer quarters. It is a favourable centre for all who intend to make excursions whether by sea or land—to the famed islands of Staffa and Iona, which no tourist in the Highlands leaves unvisited—to Skye and Lewis, to Fort-William and Inverness, to Glencoe, Loch Awe, and the other parts of the Highlands and Islands resorted to on account of their romantic scenery or their historical interest and traditional associations.

In a sketch of a tour in the Hebrides, by Mr. William Chambers of Glenormiston, published in *Chambers's Journal*, occurs the following merited tribute to the enterprise of Mr. David Hutcheson,

* Buachaille Etive.

to whose taste in planning, and energy and skill in maturing the system of steam navigation which has opened this region to travellers, the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and all who frequent them for pleasure or business, are under lasting obligations. There is an obvious propriety, and we feel a peculiar gratification, in transferring the remarks of Mr. Chambers to these pages :—

Of course this immensely convenient system of steaming attained comparative perfection in the Clyde before it was extended to the western islands; and but for the enterprise of one individual, to whom the world owes something, it would in all probability not have yet gone that length—at least to an extent worth speaking of. I allude to David Hutcheson, one of the remarkable men of his time, who lives to enjoy the reputation of having opened up the Hebrides to a course of modern improvement. Mr. Hutcheson's life, like that of Bianconi in Ireland, shows in a particular manner what one thoughtful and energetic man may do to advance the interests of his country. A notice of his projects embraces little else than an account of the existing Hebridean organisation of steamers.

Beginning his commercial life about forty years ago as a junior clerk to one of the earlier steamboat companies on the Clyde, Mr. Hutcheson was afterwards for many years connected with the firm of J. & G. Burns, a large shipping concern in Glasgow and Liverpool, and principal proprietors of the Cunard ocean steamers. Among other places on the coast, Messrs. Burns sent steamers to the western isles; but this branch of their trade, it seems, did not pay, and was willingly resigned to David Hutcheson, who had formed his own opinions on the subject. With an enthusiastic, and we should almost say a poetic, admiration of the West Highlands and Islands, and desirous not only to make tourists acquainted with their scenery, but to develop the resources of their immeasurable solitudes, he entertained the notion, that by giving large and finely-appointed steamers, and doing everything on a liberal scale, the intercourse with the Hebrides might be established on a solid and prosperous basis. Animated with this idea, he began his operations about 1851, assisted by his brother, Mr. Alexander Hutcheson, and Mr. David MacBrayne, a nephew of the Messrs. Burns, under the firm of David Hutcheson and Company.

Passing over Mr Hutcheson's initiatory attempt to establish an enlarged traffic between Glasgow and the Highlands, we come to what more immediately concerns tourists—the present arrangement of his steamboats, which is in peculiar adaptation to the nature of the waters to be traversed. Looking at the map of Scotland, we see that the long peninsula terminating in the Mull of Cantyre cuts off the lower part of the Clyde from any ready access to the western coast, but that to accommodate the transit of small vessels, the Crinan Canal has been formed across the neck of the peninsula—this very useful canal, about nine miles in length, commencing on the east at a place called Ardrishaig, on Loch Fine. Carrying the eye northward on the map, we perceive that, having got into the western sea and as far as the top of the Linnhe Loch, a transit can be made by the Caledonian Canal to Inverness. Now, independently of sea-going vessels to go round the Mull, here are several kinds of vessels in requisition to sustain the intercourse of a line of route which is awkwardly broken into distinct parts. All, however, is provided for. The Hutchesons possess altogether fourteen vessels of different classes, consuming in the aggregate per annum 24,000 tons of coal, which for convenience are placed in depôts at various leading ports.

To begin with the largest in this effective fleet, we have the *Clansman* and *Clydesdale*. These are strongly built for sea, broad in the beam, and with powerful engines. Both are fitted for carrying goods and passengers; and as a night has to be passed on board, they can each make up fifty sleeping-berths in separate cabins and on sofas. One of them leaving Glasgow every Monday and Thursday, proceeds round the Mull of Cantyre, calls at Oban, Tobermory, Portree, and other places, their regular destination being Stornoway in the Lewis. They,

however, make more extended calls beyond Stornoway; as, for example, Lochinver on the mainland, a favourite residence of the Duke of Sutherland and family, likewise Ullapool, and Gairloch in the western part of Ross-shire. Over this wide range they ply unitedly from March till November, and one alone plys once a week in winter. Twice a year, for the special accommodation of herring-fishers, they go round the North of Scotland to Thurso. Unless one were to visit the strangely indented west coast and islands, he could scarcely realise the importance of these voyages of the *Clansman* and *Clydesdale*, which, after passing Islay and Jura, pursue first a sinuous course through the Sound of Mull; then rounding the extremity of Ardnamurchan, enter that narrow and intricate channel between the mainland and Skye called the Sound of Sleat; lastly issuing into the more open Minch, they take a route direct for Stornoway—throughout their long and devious course among the islands, landing and taking in passengers and goods, and, as it were, sowing the seeds of civilisation and prosperity in places which, but for their periodical visits, would be as difficult to reach as if situated in another hemisphere.

The next class of vessels described by the writer have undergone several improvements since the period of Mr. Chambers's tour, which render a supplementary statement necessary. These are the vessels designed exclusively for passengers on the route from Glasgow by Ardrishaig and the canals to Inverness. They are all remarkable for their handsome structure, light draught of water, rapid sailing, and comfortable accommodation. The *Iona*, first in order, is unrivalled in the fleet of Clyde steamers for elegance and speed. The first part of the voyage from Glasgow to Ardrishaig is performed in the *Iona*. This beautifully moulded steamer was built in 1864, by Messrs. J. & G. Thomson of Glasgow, at a cost of about £19,000; she measures 255 feet in length, with 25 feet breadth of beam, and draws only 4½ feet of water, along the surface of which she skims with a speed of nearly twenty-one miles per hour. This vessel has repeatedly run between the Cloch and Cumbrae light-houses on the estuary of the Clyde (the distance usually selected for testing the speed of steamboats, and measuring fifteen miles and two-thirds) in less than 46 minutes; and it may be doubted if a like velocity has been attained by any steamer of the same dimensions in Europe. Her spacious and luxurious accommodations are such as to secure a comfortable passage in all conditions of the weather. From the *Iona* the passengers are transferred at Ardrishaig to a handsome little steamer on the Crinan Canal, in which they proceed across the country to Port Crinan, where they embark for Oban in the *Chevalier*, one of the powerful sea-going steamers of the Company's fleet. In noticing the arrangements made by the Company for the convenience of travelling in the West Highlands, it is only due to add that the persons in charge of the different vessels are uniformly characterised by their civility, courtesy, and attention to their passengers.

In obedience to the necessities of time if not of tide, the tourist sojourning in Oban for the night, and meditating an excursion on the morrow, behoves to practise the virtue of early rising. Betwixt six and seven o'clock the spacious bay resounds with the ringing of steam-boat bells. Two of Hutchesons' steamers are roaring and panting at the pier with their steam up, and tourists are pouring from the Great Western and Caledonian, straggling out of the minor hotels, and hurrying on board in their strangely diversified costumes, in which one seldom fails to detect the modes, even before he hears the speech, of different nations. One of the vessels has just arrived from the north, with the Inverness passengers, and on receiving a fresh accession at Oban, proceeds on her voyage southward. The other is destined, on alternate days, to carry excursionists to Glencoe, and to Staffa and Iona. We join the last expedition, and respectfully offer our humble but not inexperienced services as *cicerone* on the truly interesting and delightful excursion round the Island of Mull, trusting to be able to furnish, in the smallest practicable space, the quantity of information which the tourist may be supposed to desiderate at the moment, leaving him, if so disposed, to seek for further details from other sources, when he is more at leisure. And now, "Dark Mull," for "thy mighty Sound!"

The course of the steamer round Mull is determined by the state of the wind. Sometimes she steers by the outer passage, leaving Oban bay by the Sound of Kerrera, and sailing south-west along the rugged ironbound coast of Mull, visiting Iona first and then Staffa, returning by the Sound of Mull. When the wind is favourable, the vessel ploughs her way directly through the Sound, in which case she arrives first at Staffa and then visits Iona, returning by the southern coast. The latter route brings us without delay into contact with an unrivalled succession of picturesque objects, and when the weather is suitable is greatly to be preferred. This was the Queen's route in the autumn of '47.

The steam-boat emerges from the land-locked bay, at the portal where Dunolly Castle proudly holds watch and ward "'mid sylvan pomp and rocky majesty." The space closed in here by a little rocky islet betwixt the point of Kerrera and the promontory of Dunolly may be noted as excellent dredging-ground, having yielded the largest portion of the Mollusca catalogued in Part I. of this series of publications. On clearing the coast and crossing the entrance to Linnhe Loch, a prospect of unequalled variety and magnificence opens to the view. Sir Walter Scott describes it as

one of the most striking scenes which the Hebrides afford to the traveller. The rugged and mountainous shores of Mull rise to the left; on the right extends the lofty range of "dark Morven," with its coast line successively indented by lochs or arms of the sea running inland for several miles. A scene of alpine grandeur closes in the view to the north-east, pre-eminent amidst which springs the granite bulk of Ben-Cruachan. The lofty and fretted peaks of the Ardnamurchan hills terminate the vista in the north. "In fine weather (says Sir Walter) a grander or more impressive scene, both from its natural beauties and associations with ancient history and tradition, can hardly be imagined." From another point of view, Christopher North, in a poetical mood, exclaimed—

> "Morven and morn, and spring and solitude,
> In front is not the scene magnificent?
> * * Beauty nowhere owes to ocean
> A lovelier haunt than this."

The shores are studded with picturesque old castles, which give a human interest to the scene, although that interest is derived from the "wild tales of Albyn's warrior day." Dunolly the bold we have left behind. Dunstaffnage the regal is seen where Loch Etive joins the Linnhe Loch. Glimpses may also be caught in the same direction of Castle Stalker, situated on a small rock, in the channel that separates Lismore from Appin; and of Castle Shuna, on the island of that name, to the north-east of Lismore. On the opposite coast of Kingairloch, perched upon the summit of a conical rock close to the shore, is the Castle of Glensanda. Tirefoor Castle, in Lismore, the most ancient of these structures, is seemingly of Scandinavian origin, being built of dry stones without mortar, and in a circular form, and was probably intended for a watch-tower or beacon, as it commands a most extensive view. The boat is bearing down upon Duart Castle; and Ardtornish Castle, the most picturesque and poetical of them all, will speedily appear, along with the Castle of Aros; and if we could diverge from the Sound, and enter the inviting waters of Loch Aline, on the Morven shore, we should find its copsy banks overlooked by the old tower of Kin-Loch-Aline, esteemed by Dr. Macculloch "one of the most picturesque of the Highland castles;"* and the geologist would be delighted to discover amidst the birches and oak

* This castle, tradition says, was built by Dubh-Chal, an amazon of the Clan M'Innes, who paid the architect with *its bulk in butter!* The keep was occupied by the celebrated Colkitto and his detachment of Irish troops in 1664, by whom it was set on fire.

and rank equisetums which clothe the shores of the loch, beds of Lias limestone, literally crammed with the characteristic *Gryphæa incurva*.

Lismore lighthouse is passed where the green slopes of the "great garden," as the name of the island imports, terminate in a dangerous reef at its southern extremity; and before descending to the cabin for breakfast,* the tourist should look out for the LADY'S ROCK, which is left bare and black at ebb tide, but over which the waves break at high water. This wild-looking islet was the scene of a meditated act of cruelty in the early part of the sixteenth century, upon the basis of which Joanna Baillie constructed the tragedy of the "Family Legend. The story also gave rise to Campbell's poem of "Glenara." It is less poetically and tragically related by the late Mr James Wilson (the brother of "Christopher North"), in his entertaining "Voyage round the Coast of Scotland and the Isles:" "Lauchlan Catenach Maclean of Duart had married a daughter of Archibald, Second Earl of Argyll, with whom it may be presumed he lived on bad terms, whatever may have been the cause, although the character of the act alluded to depends, in some measure, on that cause. No man has a right to expose his wife, in consequence of any ordinary domestic disagreement, upon a wave-washed rock, with the probability of her catching cold in the first place, and the certainty of her being drowned in the second; but some accounts say that she had twice attempted her husband's life, and so assuredly she deserved to be most severely reprimanded. Be this as it may, Lauchlan carried the lady to the rock in question, where he left her at low water, no doubt desiring that at high water she would be seen no more. However, it so chanced that her cries, 'piercing the night's dull ear,' were heard by some passing fishermen, who subduing their fear of water-witches, or perhaps thinking that they had at last caught a mermaid, secured the fair one, and conveyed her away to her own people, to whom, of course, she told her own version of the story. We forget what legal steps were taken (a Sheriff's warrant probably passed for little in those days, at least in Mull), but considerable feudal disorders

* Mr. Chambers, not unmindful of the art of living by the way, as studied in the arrangements of Hutchesons' Highland fleet, says—"I may here add once for all, that in all Hutchesons' vessels, particular attention is paid to the alimentary departments. These, indeed, are conducted by the respective stewards on their own account, but according to certain terms as to quality and charge; and the good principle is followed of allowing no gratuities to be asked or taken by any one whatever. The usual charge is 2*s.* for breakfast, and 2*s.* 6*d.* for dinner: at each meal, besides the ordinary fishy delicacies, there being a profusion of dishes, and water with ice."

ensued in consequence, and the Laird of Duart was eventually assassinated in bed one night [in Edinburgh], by Sir John Campbell of Calder, the brother of the bathed lady. We hope that this was the means of reconciling all parties."

DUART CASTLE crowns a green but rocky promontory at the easternmost point of Mull commanding the entrance to the Sound. It consists of a strong square tower, the walls of which are ten and fourteen feet thick, with a prolongation of buildings overhanging a precipitous cliff, rendering it inaccessible on the side next the sea. The tower is the most ancient part of the edifice. Some of the accompanying buildings, which were preserved for the accommodation of a garrison till a not remote period, bear the date of 1663, with the crest of the Macleans, of which warlike clan this was in ancient times the principal stronghold. The present proprietor is Campbell of Possil and Torosay, whose modern mansion is snugly ensconced in the shelter of a wooded recess at some distance.

ARDTORNISH CASTLE is the next relic of Highland antiquity, occupying a headland on the Morven or mainland shore of the Sound. Its position is most romantic, having on one side a lofty and precipitous chain of rocks overhanging the sea, and on the other the narrow entrance to Loch Aline (*Anglice*, "the beautiful loch"). Sir Walter Scott says:—"The ruins of Ardtornish are not now very considerable, and consist chiefly of the remains of an old keep, or tower, with fragments of outward defences. But in former days it was a place of great consequence, being one of the principal strongholds which the Lords of the Isles, during the period of their stormy independence, possessed upon the mainland of Argyleshire. Here they assembled what popular tradition calls their parliaments, meaning, I suppose, their *cour pléniere*, or assembly of feudal and patriarchal vassals and dependents." Sir Walter adds an incident of historical interest:—"From this Castle of Ardtornish, upon the 19th day of October, 1461, John de Yle, designing himself Earl of Ross and Lord of the Isles, granted, in the style of an independent sovereign, a commission to his trusty and well-beloved cousins, Ronald of the Isles, and Duncan, Arch-Dean of the Isles,* for empowering them to enter into a treaty

* It is difficult to trace in the records and remains of those turbulent times any indication of ecclesiastical influence being employed otherwise than in political transactions of the nature here referred to. Mr. Wilson observes—"In regard to the County of Argyll, it has been remarked that the only kind of Tories not found here are *ora-tories*, there being no chapels attached to the strongholds of the Hebridean chieftains"

with the most excellent Prince Edward, by the grace of God, King of France and England and Lord of Ireland." The result was a treaty by which the Lord of the Isles became a vassal to the crown of England, and agreed to assist Edward IV. and James, Earl of Douglas, in subjugating Scotland.*

On the right the steamer passes Loch Aline House (Mrs. Madelne Patterson); and on the opposite shore the opening up of the Bay of Aros discloses the little village of Salen, with the Castle of Aros, another fortress of the Island Chieftains, pitched in a picturesque manner on the summit of a rocky hill. The village is the property of Lord Strathallan. From this point an imposing view is obtained of the two loftiest hills in the interior of Mull, namely, Bentallach, distinguished by its saddle-shaped summit, 2800 feet above the level of the sea; and Benmore, 3000 feet. Further onwards, on the Morven shore, amongst young plantations, is descried the estate of Drimnin (Lady Gordon), where there is a Roman Catholic Chapel, built by the late Sir Charles Gordon, Secretary to the Highland Society. This edifice occupies the site of the old Castle of Drimnin, which was pulled down by the

* The sight of the beautiful ruin of Ardtornish Castle recalls to every reader of the "Lord of the Isles" the animating lines in which Sir Walter Scott celebrates that ancient seat of feudal power:—

"Wake, Maid of Lorn!" the minstrels sung.
Thy rugged halls, Ardtornish! rung,
And the dark seas, thy towers that lave,
Heaved on the beach a softer wave,
As 'mid the tuneful choir to keep
The diapason of the Deep.
Lull'd were the winds on Inninmore,
And green Loch-Aline's woodland shore,
As if wild woods and waves had pleasure
In listing to the lovely measure.
* * * "The turret's airy head,
Slender and steep, and battled round,
O'erlook'd, dark Mull! thy mighty Sound,
Where thwarting tides, with mingled roar,
Part thy swarth hills from Morven's shore."

And again, where the vessel containing the Bruce is described approaching the castle through a dark and tempestuous sea, and the festal radiance of Ardtornish, "'Twixt cloud and ocean hung," is set in contrast to the terrors of the night—

"Beneath the castle's sheltering lee,
They staid their course in quiet sea.
Hewn in the rock, a passage there
Sought the dark fortress by a stair
So straight, so high, so steep,
With peasant's staff one valiant hand
Might well the dizzy pass have mann'd,
'Gainst hundreds arm'd with spear and brand,
And plunged them in the deep."

late proprietor to make room for the chapel. (Statistical Account.) In the neighbourhood is seen Killundine Castle, a place of little note, and evidently of comparatively modern origin. On the Mull side, the coast now becomes lofty and precipitous, and is enveloped in natural woods. Nothing on the voyage exceeds the approach to TOBERMORY in sylvan beauty and maritime grandeur. When the tide is favourable, the steamer enters the bay by a narrow channel, opening between the wooded beach and a sweet little island named Calve or Colay. This green island land-locks the bay. The town, with its white houses, curves round the shore, and straggles with picturesque irregularity up the verdant braes behind. The steeps and terraces to the left are adorned with copsewood, and studded with the plantations of Drumfin, a charming residence of M'Lean of Coll. The waters of Mary's Lake are precipitated over a lofty cliff, and descend in a shining torrent, which disappears amongst the umbrageous woods below. Ranges of lofty mountains all around close in a scene of exquisite loveliness.

TOBERMORY, or "The Well of Mary," is so called from a well near the town, named in honour of "Our Lady." The place was commenced in 1788 by the British Society for Extending the Fisheries. At that time it consisted but of two houses. The population at the census of 1861 was 1,566, being chiefly employed not in fishing but in the coasting trade. The County Buildings occupy a prominent site overlooking the lower part of the town; a branch of the Clydesdale Bank presents another conspicuous feature in the principal street. A commodious quay, completed in 1864, has been constructed by F. W. Caldwell, Esq., the proprietor of that part of the town where it is situated. Another chief proprietor in Tobermory is Captain Campbell of Aros. The terraced walks seen stretching along the face of the heights behind the town, and extending to the northern extremity of the bay, were formed by the townspeople during a period of famine, when the benevolence of the Lowlanders was invoked on their behalf, and the money contributed was judiciously expended in providing productive labour. An extensive view, including some of the remoter islands of the Hebrides, is obtained from the heights overlooking the bay. Tobermory is the metropolis of Mull; law and justice are here dispensed by the Sheriff-Substitute to Ulva, Iona, Tiree, Coll, and misty Morven; and the Parliamentary voters resident in these distant localities also repair thither on the occasion of a county election. One of the vessels of the Spanish Armada was blown up and sunk off the harbour of Tobermory, under the direction of Maclean of Duart. Several of

her guns have been brought up. About two miles north from Tobermory is Bloody Bay, the scene of a great sea-fight about the year 1480, betwixt two contending factions in the isles. The lighthouse, named Runa Gal (Ruenagael), completed in 1857, is built upon a dangerous part of the rocky coast in this quarter. When Dr. Johnson and Boswell visited Mull, in 1773, they landed at Tobermory, took up their quarters at the inn, and thence proceeded to Dr. Maclean's, about a mile from the village. They afterwards rode across the island on little Mull horses.

The steamer now reaches the mouth of Loch Sunart, at the north point of Mull; and the tourist, if he has not made the discovery earlier, now finds himself vaulting over the long rolling waves of the Atlantic. On the right is the Point of Ardnamurchan, the westernmost extremity of the mainland of Scotland. About five or six miles from the Point, on the same shore, is observed the Castle of Mingarry, the ancient stronghold of Mac Ian. It is of irregular shape, being broadest on the land-side, where it is protected by a fosse, over which a drawbridge was thrown; its narrowest part fronts the sea, which it overhangs, the rock here having been scarped and rendered perpendicular. The Castle thus skilfully constructed, and

* * * "sternly placed,
O'erawed the woodland and the waste."

So lately as 1644 it was held by the garrison of Sir Donald Campbell, who surrendered to Montrose's general, Alaster Macdonald, by whom the place was threatened with fire. Alaster had on his voyage captured a vessel in which were three Covenanting ministers, who, after preaching in Ireland, were returning to Scotland, and whom he shut up in Mingarry Castle, where their sufferings were terribly aggravated by the Marquis of Argyle's unavailing attempts to liberate them. Two of the three perished in consequence, and the third regained his liberty after a dismal imprisonment of ten months.

The Point of Callioch is here seen on the north-eastern shore of Mull. The house of Sunipol stands out conspicuously upon the beach, occupying the centre of a bay immediately before doubling the stormy headland where Staffa first comes into view. It was at Sunipol House that Thomas Campbell, the poet, lived for some time as a tutor, in his College days, when he was seventeen years of age. Writing to a friend, he said, "The Point of Callioch commands a magnificent prospect of thirteen Hebrid islands, among which are Staffa and Icolmkill, which I visited with enthusiasm."

The impressions produced upon his youthful imagination and feelings by

> " The white wave foaming to the distant sky,"

and

> " The sounding storm that sweeps the rugged isle,
> The dark-blue rocks in barren grandeur piled,"

the poet has embodied in his Elegy written in Mull. " I had also now and then," says he, in the letter quoted, " a sight of wild deer sweeping across that wilder country, and of eagles perching on its shores. These objects fed the romance of my fancy, and I may say that I was attached to Sunipol before I took leave of it. Nevertheless, God wot, I was better pleased to look on the kirk-steeples and whinstone causeways of Glasgow, than on all the eagles and wild deer of the Highlands."

The steamer is now full in sight of the Treshinish Isles, disposed in a ridge extending for five miles in a north-easterly direction, and forming a sort of breakwater on the north-west for the island of Staffa and the bay of Loch Tua in Mull. The principal islets are Fladda, Linga, Bach or the Dutchman's Cap, and the two Cairnburgs. They are seldom and not easily approached. They are all formed of trap rocks, sometimes passing into basalt, but destitute of the columnar form. The larger Cairnburg was fortified by the Norwegians, and stood a siege by a detachment of Cromwell's army, but was at length taken and burnt. It is fancied that many of the books and records which had been rescued from Iona were lost during this siege. The place was garrisoned by the Macleans in 1715, and more than once taken and retaken during the rebellion of that year. A wall with embrasures for ordnance still remains, skirting the edge of the cliff of the larger Cairnburg. On the smaller island are the remains of the barrack. Macculloch says—" The appearance of a modern battery in such a situation may well puzzle an antiquary who is unaware of its recent history, and whose ideas ascend to the times of Haco or perhaps of Fingal; a modern engineer will only wonder at the choice of such a position for a fortress." Away to the west of the Treshinish Isles are dimly descried " the sandy Coll" and " the wild Tiree."

The islands of Gometra, Ulva, and Colonsay (the latter not to be confounded, as in several of the guide-books, with the Colonsay of the M'Neills), lie betwixt Loch Tua and Loch-na-Keal, in the northern part of the great embayment which, as a reference to the map will show, forms a conspicuous feature in the outline of the west side of Mull. The channel which separates Ulva from Gometra is so narrow that at a distance they appear to constitute one island

Ulva is celebrated for its basaltic pillars, which are compared to those of the Giant's Causeway, although confessedly inferior to those of Staffa. Dr Johnson visited Ulva in his Hebridean Tour, and a writer in the "Statistical Account" says "the room where the Doctor spent the night, indulging his bile against the then unclothed appearance of the landscape,* is yet to be seen in the old Macquarrie mansion-house." The island is now adorned with plantations. Some years ago the little island of Colonsay possessed only one family, or six souls; and its soil being described as less fertile than that of the other two islands, it may be supposed to offer a fair instance of the economical problem of a population treading upon the heels of the means of subsistence.

Inchkenneth, or Inniskenneth, a fertile little island at the mouth of Loch-na-Keal, and separated from the peninsula of Gribon by a channel half a mile in breadth, is interesting as having been the place where Dr. Johnson and his friend Boswell were so hospitably and agreeably entertained by Sir Allan Maclean and his two daughters, the remains of whose cottage are still to be seen. The Doctor and Bozzy landed at Tobermory from Coll, where they had been detained for some time by unfavourable weather. "I want to be on the mainland, and go on with existence," said Johnson impatiently—adding, "this is a waste of life." The kindness and courtesy of his reception in Mull reconciled him to his island life. Near Tobermory he was entertained at the house of Dr. Maclean, author of the History of the Macleans. Miss Maclean read and translated to him Gaelic poetry, and played the spinnet for his delectation; although the Doctor's perception of music was not of the acutest, as may be inferred from the circumstance that when in Skye he had become so fond of the bagpipe as frequently to stand for some time "with his ear close to the great drone." "She is the most accomplished lady that I have found in the Highlands," said Dr. Johnson, speaking of Miss Maclean, "she knows French, music, and drawing, sews neatly, makes shell-work, and can milk cows; in short, she can do everything. She talks sensibly, and is the first person whom I have found that can translate Earse poetry literally."† At Macquarrie's in Ulva, on

* Dr. Johnson lost his large oak-stick while he was riding across Mull on a Highland sheltie, and vowed to Boswell that the people had stolen it. "Consider, Sir, the value of such a *piece of timber* here!"

† The history of Miss Maclean has a mournful sequel. She married unhappily and resided at Tobermory with her husband, till his death, in reduced circumstances. She then became dependent upon the bounty of Maclean of Coll, and died in 1826. (Boswell's Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Dr. S. Johnson. Edited by Robert Carruthers, Esq. of Inverness.)

their way to Inchkenneth, the travellers were not less hospitably treated. In their host they found a polite and well-informed Highland gentleman, and much a man of the world. Speaking of him, when by themselves, and employing Latin, that they might not be understood by the Highlanders—"*Aspectum generosum habet,*" remarked Boswell; "*Et generosum animum,*" responded the oracle. At Inchkenneth the Doctor received another Highland welcome,—"was cheered by the sight of a road marked with cart-wheels, as on the mainland"—found a parcel of Edinburgh newspapers, books, cultivated society, and home comforts. Miss Maclean, Sir Allan's daughter, read prayers on Sunday, and the Doctor one of Ogden's sermons.* The Doctor declared it had been the most agreeable Sunday he had ever passed. The piety and tranquillity, the grace, the accomplishments, and the ancestral dignity which he witnessed under the roof-tree of Maclean, Johnson celebrated in Latin verse. He was here contented and happy. What did he need more, even in the Highlands?

"Quo vagor ulterius? quod ubique requiritur hic est?
Hic secura quies, hic et honestus amor."

"Then wherefore further seek to rove,
While here is all our hearts approve—
Repose, security, and love?"

It was from Inchkenneth that Dr. Johnson and Mr. Boswell proceeded to visit Iona, on the 19th of October, 1773. "We saw the Island of Staffa, at no very great distance," says Boswell, "but could not land upon it, the surge was so high on its rocky coast." On the northern shore of Mull, and commanding a view of the Ulva north loch, is Torloisk, the beautiful seat of the late Mrs. Maclean Clephane (now Earl Compton's), a capacious-looking mansion, placed on a wide semicircular inclined plane, surrounded by thriving plantations, and backed by lofty hills.

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* They were shown a ruined chapel near Sir Allan's house. In a letter to Mrs. Thrale, Johnson wrote—"Boswell, who is very pious, went into it at night to perform his devotions, but came back in haste, *for fear of spectres!*"

STAFFA.

"Compared to this, what are the cathedrals or the palaces built by man? mere models or playthings, imitations as diminutive as his works will always be when compared to those of Nature. Where is now the boast of the architect? regularity, the only part in which he fancied himself to exceed his mistress Nature, is here found in her possession, and here it has been for ages undescribed."—*Sir Joseph Banks.*

"Thanks for the lessons of this spot—fit school
For the presumptuous thoughts that would assign
Mechanic laws to agency Divine;
And, measuring heaven by earth, would over-rule
Infinite Power. The pillar'd vestibule,
Expanding yet precise, the roof embowed,
Might seem designed to humble man, when proud
Of his best workmanship by plan and tool.
Down-bearing with his whole Atlantic weight
Of tide and tempest on the structure's base,
And flashing to that structure's topmost height,
Ocean has proved its strength—and of its grace
In calms is conscious, finding for his freight
Of softest music some responsive place."

Wordsworth.

STAFFA* was unknown as an object of scientific interest and picturesque natural grandeur till the year 1772, when it was visited by Sir Joseph Banks, on his voyage to Iceland. His drawings and description of the island were communicated to Mr. Pennant, by whom they were published in his "Tour to the Hebrides," in 1774. A careful and accurate survey of the island was made by Dr. John Macculloch, the geologist, and published in his "Description of the Western Islands of Scotland," in 1819. The first aspect of Staffa as seen from the steam-boat is not such as to awaken a responsive sympathy in the mind of the visitor with the sentiments of the naturalist and the poet quoted as the mottoes to this chapter. The island is not remarkable for its height, and is only about a mile and a half in circumference; its outline is irregularly oval, and its surface an undulating table-land. The privilege of visiting Staffa is secured to the public by Messrs. Hutcheson and Co., who have leased the island, and sublet it for feeding sheep. Formerly black cattle were kept on the island, but they became so wild in their insular solitude as to render it difficult to remove them; and on one occasion an Irish tourist who had strayed from his party into the vicinity of the herd, found his intrusion resented by a

* A Scandinavian word meaning, "The Island of Columns."

long-horned ox, which pursued him with fell intent to the shore, where the breathless fugitive was fain to seek security in the steamer's boat. When Dr. Garnett visited Staffa in 1798, it was inhabited by a herd and his family, who had resided there summer and winter for three years. Subsequently they took up their quarters on the island in summer only, having found their condition during the storms of winter somewhat disquieting; for the sea broke upon the shores with such impetuosity, and rushed into the caves which penetrate its interior with such noise, that the hut shook to its foundation, and they could get no sleep. This sleepless rocking a-nights they ascribed not to the spirit of the storm, but to the "evil spirit." The dilapidated walls of the herd's shieling remain, but the island has long been tenanted only by sheep and sea-fowl.

When Queen Victoria visited Staffa, on the 19th of August, 1847, the wind was so gentle and the tide so low as to admit of the royal barge, containing her Majesty, Prince Albert, and the royal children, being rowed into Fingal's Cave. Prince Albert afterwards landed on the Bouachaille, or Herdsman, and along with several members of his suite clambered for a while over its piles of basaltic columns. It is seldom, indeed, that in these turbulent seas tourists visit the island in such favouring circumstances as were vouchsafed on this interesting occasion to our gracious Monarch; but the landing is nevertheless effected with safety, and even with comfort—all things considered—by boatmen from Ulva, hardy, skilful, and vociferous, who conduct their powerful boat with great dexterity through the surf which breaks incessantly upon the shore, and then act as guides in the great cave—steady of head and hand as cragsmen. The usual landing-place is on the eastern shore, in the lee of the prevailing winds, and where the rocks are low and accessible.

The first object which claims attention on landing is the Clamshell Cave, where a mass of basaltic pillars opens upon the shore in a curved form, which has not unaptly been compared to the ribs of a ship. The wall on the opposite side of the cavity consists of the projecting ends of horizontal columns, having the honeycomb appearance which will be observed developed on a still larger scale as we proceed in our survey of the basaltic rocks along the shore.

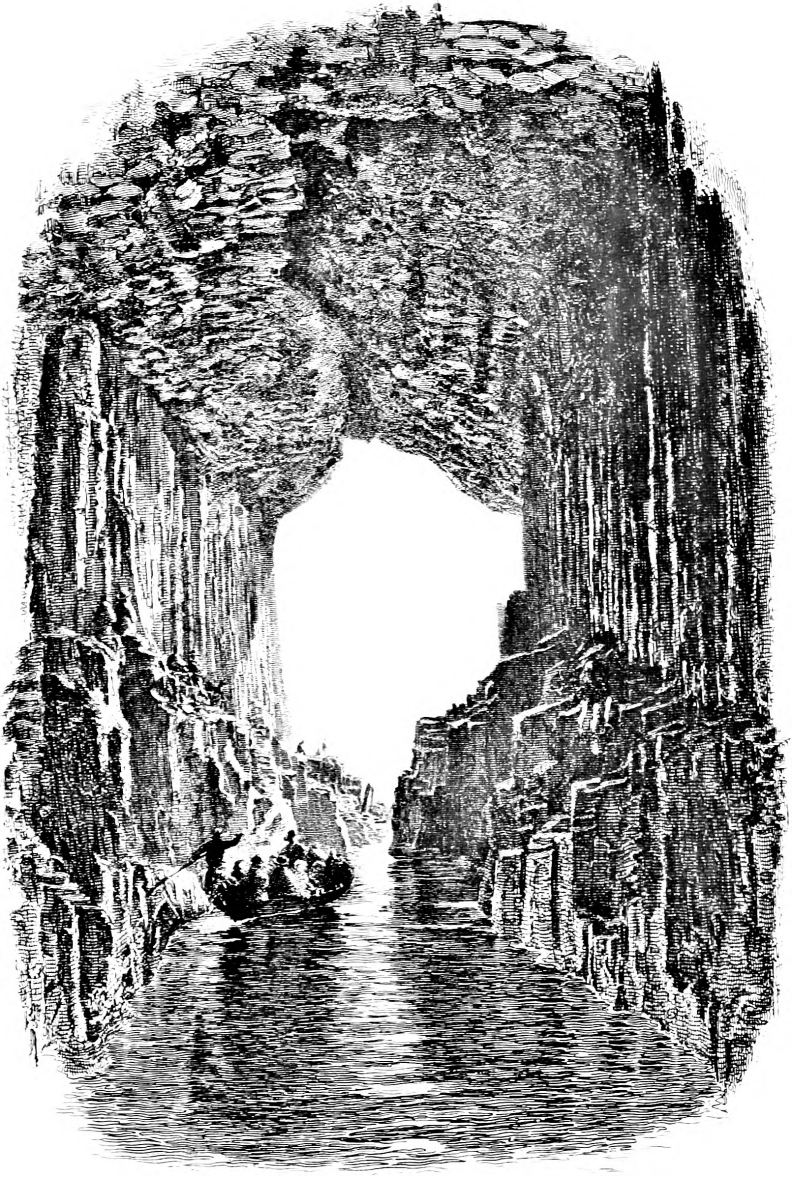
Proceeding over the rugged causeway formed by truncated columns, we pass on the left, Bouachaille, Booshala, or the Herdsman, a conical islet of basaltic pillars, about 30 feet high, and

resting upon a series of horizontal columns which are only disclosed at low water. This beautiful islet is separated from the causeway by a narrow channel, through which a current of green and most transparent water rushes with startling impetuosity, dashing itself upon the rocks into foam and spray, which often glistens in the sunshine with the brilliant hues of the iris. "This lesser isle," Mr. Wilson remarks, "is itself a perfect gem in respect to its beauty of basaltic structure, being composed entirely of the most symmetrical columnar forms, several of them bent in a peculiar manner, and the generality lying on their sides."

From this point forward the pillars supporting the tabular portion of the island gradually increase in magnitude and grace of proportion, forming a continuous colonnade along the vertical face of the cliff. A broken column about two feet in height, with another behind it somewhat higher, at the base of the cliff, present the rude appearance of a seat, which has accordingly obtained the name of FINGAL'S CHAIR, and "a sublime though rocky throne it really is for such a hero, in the midst of Nature's unmatched magnificence."

The pillars whose crowns form the grand causeway are generally hexagonal, some are pentagonal, and a few have only four sides. Near the entrance to the cave they acquire their greatest diameter and altitude. The side of one of the hexagonal columns near the entrance measures about two feet, the average breadth of the side of the hexagon in the greater number of pillars being about fifteen inches. On the Herdsman the hexagonal sides of the pillars do not on an average exceed four inches.

On rounding a projecting part of the cliff, the august vestibule of the CAVE of FINGAL is presented to the view. The exquisite symmetry of the arch at the entrance is seen to most advantage from the steam-boat at a little distance, and such an opportunity of viewing it is usually afforded to visitors on the vessel's quitting the island. The pure green wave surges into the recesses of the cave with a ceaseless resonance which early obtained for it the Gaelic name of *Uaimh Bhinn*, the Musical Cave. The access to the interior is by means of a rugged and precarious pathway formed by the moist and slippery tops of broken pillars, along which the visitor secures his footing by the aid of a strong rope fastened by iron bolts to the rock. In this way the innermost part of the cave may be reached by the more adventurous, although most people are well content to take up a position where they can contemplate the marvellous spectacle midway between the entrance and the further extremity,—that is to say, if contemplation is



possible amidst the singing and shouting which the great majority of tourists appear to consider as indispensable to the true enjoyment of the scene. Wordsworth, in one of his noble Staffa Sonnets, laments the necessity of *seeing* without being able to *feel* the "far-famed sight" amidst a motley, hurrying, loud, and volatile group of tourists; and expresses a wish which many a visitor must cherish but few can hope to realise:—

"O, for those motions only that invite
The ghost of Fingal to his tuneful cave,
By the breeze entered, and wave after wave,
Softly embosoming the timid light!
And by *one* votary, who at will might stand
Gazing, and take into his mind and heart,
With undisturbed reverence, the effect
Of those proportions where the Almighty hand
That made the worlds, the Sovereign Architect,
Has deigned to work as if with human art!"

Sir Joseph Banks and Dr. Macculloch both took measurements of the dimensions of the cave, but those of the latter are here preferred as being more deliberate and accurate:—

	Feet.
Height from the water at mean tide to the top of the arch,...	66
Do. from the top of the arch to that of the cliff above, ...	30
Do. of the pillars on the western side,.....	36
Do. of the pillars on the eastern side, ...	18
Breadth of the Cave at entrance, ...	42
Do. near the inner extremity, ...	22
Length of the Cave, ...	227

"The sides of this cave (says Macculloch) are, like the front, columnar, and, in a general sense, perpendicular. The columns are frequently broken and irregularly grouped, so as to catch a variety of direct and reflected tints, mixed with unexpected shadows, that produce a picturesque effect which no regularity could have given. The ceiling is various in different parts of the cave. The surfaces of the columns above are sometimes distinguished from each other by the infiltration of carbonate of lime into their interstices. It would be no less presumptuous than useless to attempt a description of the picturesque effect of that to which the pencil itself is inadequate. But if this cave were even destitute of that order and symmetry, that richness arising from multiplicity of parts, combined with greatness of dimension and simplicity of style, which it possesses, still the prolonged depth, the twilight gloom, half concealing the playful and varying effects of reflected light, the echo of the measured surge as it rises and falls, the

transparent green of the water, and the profound and fairy solitude of the whole scene, could not fail strongly to impress a mind gifted with any sense of beauty in art or in nature."

"Fingal's Cave," says Mr. James Wilson, "is indeed a most magnificent example of nature's architecture. A vast archway of nearly seventy feet in height, supporting a massive entablature of thirty feet additional, and receding for about 230 feet inwards,—the entire front as well as the great cavernous sides being composed of countless complicated ranges of gigantic columns, beautifully jointed, and of most symmetrical though somewhat varied forms,—the roof itself exhibiting a rich grouping of overhanging pillars, some of snowy whiteness, from the calcareous covering by which they have become encrusted,—the whole rising from and often seen reflected by the ocean waters,—forms truly a picture of unrivalled grandeur, and one on which it is delightful to dwell even in remembrance. How often have we since recalled to mind the regularity, magnitude, and loftiness of those columns, the fine o'erhanging cliff of small prismatic basalt to which they give support, worn by the murmuring waves of many thousand years into the semblance of some stupendous Gothic arch,

'Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault,'

the wild waters ever urge their way,—and the receding sides of that great temple, running inwards in solemn perspective, yet ever and anon, as ocean heaves and falls, rendered visible in its far sanctuary, by the broad and flashing light reflected by the foaming surges sweeping onwards from below! Then the broken and irregular gallery which overhangs that subterranean flood, and from which, looking upwards and around, we behold the rich and varied hues of red, green, and gold, which give such splendid relief to the deep and sombre coloured columns,—the clear bright tints which sparkle beneath our feet, from the wavering yet translucent sea,—the whole accompanied by the wild yet mellow and sonorous moan of each successive billow, which rises up the sides, or rolls over the finely formed crowns of the lowlier and disjointed pillars:—these are a few of the features of this exquisite and most singular scene, which cannot fail to astonish the beholder. Neither can they fail, while thus exciting his unfeigned admiration of the wonderful works of nature, to call most vividly to mind the character and attributes of their Great Creator; and so ever blending a lowly spirit and a grateful heart with the wise pursuit of knowledge, the student of mysteries such as these will escape the entangling mazes of a false and feeble, because a godless philosophy."

Bishop Van Troil, who visited Staffa along with Sir Joseph Banks, thus notices the cave in his "Letters on Iceland":—"How magnificent are the remains of the porticoes of the ancients! and with what admiration do we behold the colonnades which adorn the principal buildings of our times! and yet every one who compares them with Fingal's Cave, formed by nature in the isle of Staffa, must readily acknowledge that this piece of nature's architecture far surpasses everything that invention, luxury, and taste ever produced among the Greeks."

In the same spirit, a French author, Faujas de St. Fond, contrasting Staffa with other superb basaltic causeways that he had seen, says—"But I have never found anything which comes near this, either for the admirable regularity of the columns, the height of the arch, the situation, the form, the elegance of this production of nature, or its resemblance to the master-pieces of art. It is therefore not at all surprising that tradition should have made it the abode of a hero."

While quoting descriptions of Staffa,* which with all their power, still convey but a feeble impression of the reality, it would be unpardonable to omit the well known graphic verses of Sir Walter Scott in "The Lord of the Isles":—

"The shores of Mull on the eastward lay,
And Ulva dark, and Colonsay,
And all the group of islets gay
That guard famed Staffa round.
Then all unknown its columns rose,
Where dark and undisturbed repose
The cormorant had found,
And the shy seal had quiet home,
And weltered in that wondrous dome,
Where, as to shame the temples decked
By skill of earthly architect,
Nature herself, it seemed, would raise
A Minster to her Maker's praise!
Not for a meaner use ascend
Her columns, or her arches bend;
Nor of a theme less solemn tells
That mighty surge that ebbs and swells,

* "I have stood on the shores of Staffa; I have seen 'the temple not made with hands;' I have seen the majestic swell of the ocean, the pulsations of the great Atlantic, beating in its inmost sanctuary, and swelling a note of praise nobler far than any that ever pealed from human organs."—*Sir Robert Peel, in his Glasgow Speech*, 1837.

And still, between each awful pause,
From the high vault an answer draws,
In varied tone prolonged and high,
That mocks the organ's melody.
Nor doth its entrance front in vain
To old Iona's holy fane,
That Nature's voice might seem to say,
'Well hast thou done, frail child of clay!
Thy humble powers that stately shrine
Tasked high and hard—but witness mine!'"

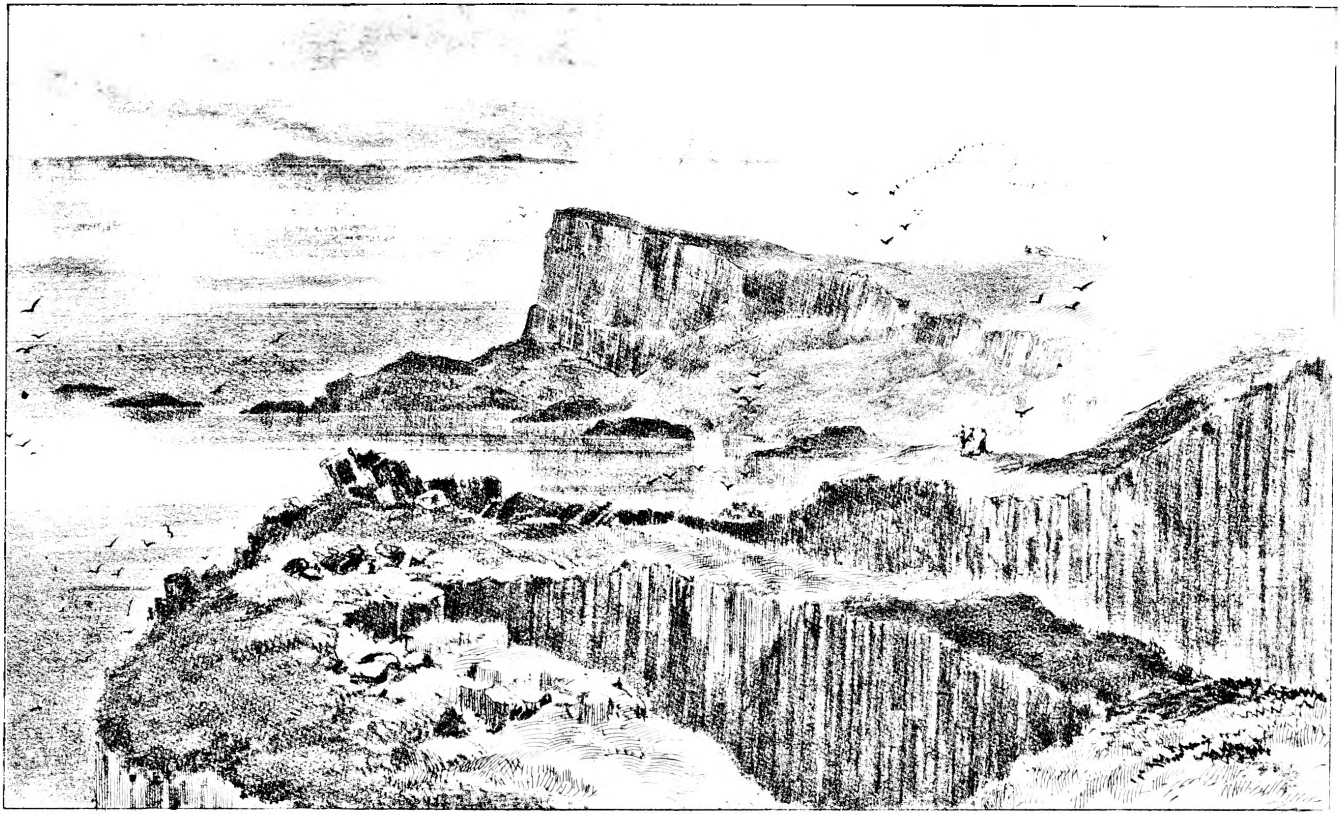
There are several other caves in the island which the steam-boat tourist has no opportunity of inspecting, and which can only be visited by taking advantage of the ready and efficient services of the Ulva or the Iona boatmen. Every person who revisits Staffa will concur in the testimony that its grandeur and interest become enhanced the more its wonders are scrutinised.

The Boat Cave has been compared to the gallery of a mine, being excavated in the lowest stratum, on a level with the sea, by which alone it is accessible. Between it and the Great Cave the columnar cliff attains its greatest altitude, the upper surface being about 112 feet above high-water-mark. The interior of this cave is without interest, but in magnificence and symmetry the range of its over-hanging pillars excels the façade of Fingal's Cave. The height of this cave is about 15 feet above high-water-mark; its breadth 12 feet; its length 150 feet.

Mackinnon's, the Scart, or Cormorant's Cave lies to the south of the former, and is comparatively easy of access, being tunnelled out of the lower bed of rock, where it terminates in a gravelly beach. The interior is spacious but rugged and irregular. In height it is about 50 feet; in breadth 48 feet; in length 224 feet. The crevices of the rock are resorted to by the Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*).

At the north-east end of Staffa are several small caves into which the waves dash with violence, producing by the condensation of the air in the cavity a sound like the discharge of a mortar. When Dr. Garnett visited Staffa he was for some time, he says, under the impression that the reports proceeded from vessels firing signals of distress.

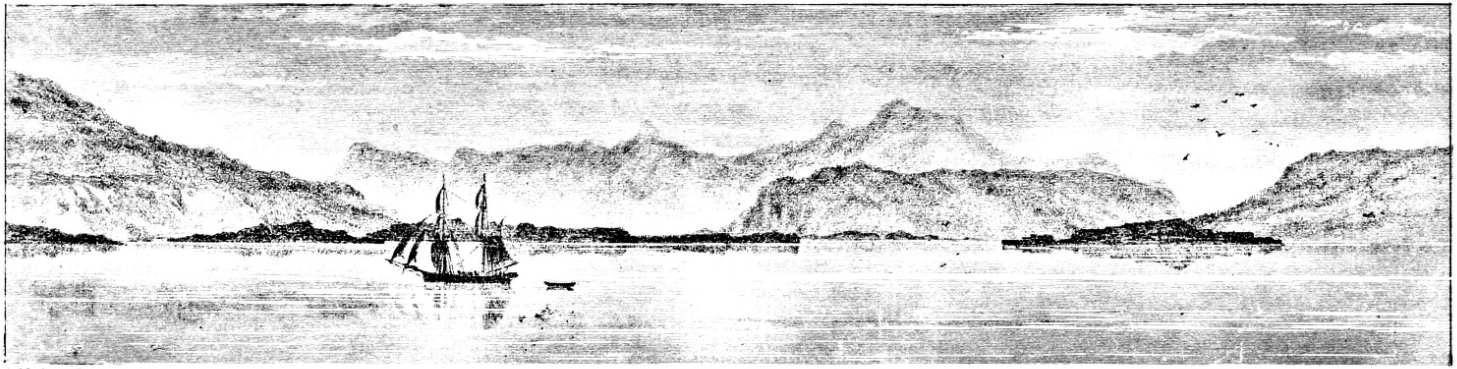
Returning to the landing place, we ascend to the grassy summit of the island by a wooden flight of steps constructed by the Messrs. Hutcheson close to the Clamshell Cave. The surface of the island presents few objects of interest. It possesses no rare plants. *Rhodiola rosea* and *Cotyledon Umbilicus* abound on the



A. Macgeorge Delt.

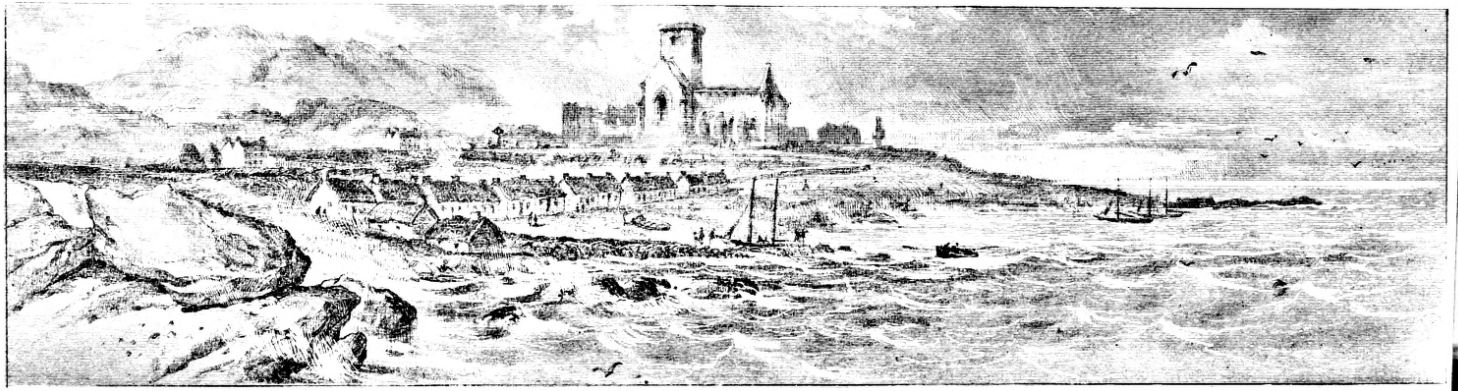
Maclure & Macdonald Lith.

STAFFA, FROM THE SUMMIT.



A Machure Delt.

MULL, FROM STAFFA.



From a Photograph.

Machure & Macdonald Lith.

IONA.

cliffs. *Orobanche rubra* has occasionally been found growing here as elsewhere amongst disintegrating basalt. *Erythræa latifolia*, set down in the books as having been found in Staffa, has been sought for in vain; *E. Centaurium* is common. *Salix Lapponum (S. arenaria)* abounds in Staffa and Iona. There are no trees on the island. The surface is covered with rich grass, forming excellent pasture. Among the birds frequenting Staffa are the Barnacle Goose, Common Sheildrake, Black Guillemot, Puffin, Cormorant, Solan Goose, Kittiwake, Stormy Petrel, Gulls of various species, Great Northern Diver, &c. Kittiwake Gulls in great numbers, together with the Razor-billed Auk, rear their young in the Great Cave.*

The prismatic or columnar form impressed upon the cliffs of Staffa and the neighbouring islands is characteristic of basalt; and the tendency to assume this shape appears with more or less distinctness in the basaltic trap rocks abounding on the west coast of Scotland. Mr. Gregory Watt showed by his experiments on basalt, in 1804, that in the gradual cooling of a molten mass of that rock, spheroids were produced, the union of which resulted in the prismatic form. This concretionary or globular structure is often visible in the decomposition of trappean and volcanic rocks. In mineral character, succession, and thickness, Dr. James Bryce, of Glasgow, has observed a remarkable resemblance between the basaltic cliffs of the Giant's Causeway and those of Staffa. The Staffa rocks consist of three distinct beds—the lowest, a mass of trap tuff; the next, the great columnar range; and the uppermost an irregular mixture of bent and broken pillars and amorphous basalt. On the western side of the island, these different kinds of rocks are indiscriminately commingled.

The view obtained from the summit of Staffa of the columnar ranges of the cliffs below, and of the rugged grandeur of the shores of Mull, with the lofty mountains of the interior, amply compensates for the absence of objects of interest on the surface. The appearance of Mull, as viewed from this point, is happily represented in the accompanying print. Gometra and Ulva are distinctly descried to the north and north-west. Inchkenneth is seen at the mouth of Loch-na-keal, with Little Colonsay in the same direction, but nearer to Staffa. The group of the Treshnish Islands is also

* A list of the birds frequenting Staffa and the neighbouring islands, prepared by Mr. H. D. Graham, will be found in "Staffa and Iona Described and Illustrated," published by Messrs. Blackie & Son.

readily distinguished, more especially the Dutchman's Cap and the two Cairnburgs, one of the latter surmounted by a lofty natural arch. The peaks of the Skye mountains are visible in the distant north, and Tiree and Coll bound the western horizon. While the eye is contemplating the varied aspects of this magnificent archipelago, the ear ever and anon is filled with the sound of the waves as they break in white surf on the cliffs, or roll with solemn cadence into the caves, causing the superincumbent mass to vibrate beneath one's feet. Flocks of gulls wheel round the cliffs, or soar high above them, with wings rivalling the summer cloud in their snowy whiteness, as their forms are seen sharply defined far up against the clear blue sky, or hovering over the water and swooping down in rapid and graceful gyrations, skimming or dipping under the surface in quest of prey, and mingling the while their sharp half-screaming, half-laughing cries with the hollow sounds of the surging shore.

IONA.

"We were now treading that illustrious island which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions, whence savage clans and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge and the blessings of religion. To abstract the mind from all local emotions would be impossible if it were endeavoured, and would be foolish if it were possible. Whatever withdraws us from the power of our senses, whatever makes the past, the distant, or the future, predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of thinking beings. Far from me, and from my friends, be such frigid philosophy as may conduct us indifferent and unmoved over any ground which has been dignified by wisdom, bravery, or virtue. That man is little to be envied whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plains of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona!"—*Dr. Samuel Johnson.*

"On to Iona!—What can she afford
To *us*, save matter for a thoughtful sigh,
Heaved over ruin with stability
In urgent contrast?"

Wordsworth.

The hill of Dun-ii, the highest land in Iona, is distinctly visible from Staffa. From the entrance to the Cave of Fingal is seen the distant tower of the Cathedral, rising from the lowly shores of the Blessed Isle. A century has not yet elapsed since the pilgrim to the great temple of Nature first felt his heart rising with instinctive reverence to Nature's God, as he stood awe-struck under its vaulted roof. But centuries before human ear had listened to the "diapason of the deep" pealing in the solemn recesses of Naimh Binn, the humble fanes of Iona were the resort of pilgrims from

many lands; and from its green shores went forth the messengers of the Cross to spread the light of Christianity and the benefits of civilisation over the benighted mainland of Britain, whence a pure faith was radiated to the Continent of Europe. Its ecclesiastical remains, however interesting in an archæological point of view, are monuments of the declining period of Iona's history. Nothing remains to commemorate the Scriptural simplicity and apostolic zeal of Columba and the Culdees, but the lowly little island itself, whose green fields and shining white shores are for ever consecrated by the memory of the piety, the labours, and the sufferings of men of whom the world was not worthy. But why, says the poet,

> "Even for a moment, has our verse deplored
> Their wrongs, since they fulfilled their destiny?
> And when, subjected to a common doom
> Of mutability, those far-famed Piles
> Shall disappear from both the sister isles,
> Iona's Saints, forgetting not past days,
> Garlands shall wear of amaranthine bloom,
> While heaven's vast sea of voices chants their praise."

Iona* lies to the south of Staffa about seven or eight miles, and is separated from the Ross of Mull, a prolonged low peninsula of granite forming the southern extremity of that island, by a Sound a mile in breadth. The prevailing rock in Iona is gneiss, but the geological connection of the island with the Ross of Mull is indicated by the occurrence on the shore of several rocks *(in situ)* of the same ruddy-coloured granite which forms the round hummocky knolls of the opposite coast. Veins of granite also traverse the gneiss in various parts of Iona. The shore first approached is white with accumulations of shell-sand, which impart to the adjoining fields the bright verdure peculiar to calcareous soils. The appearance of the square tower of the Cathedral, rising bleak and bare above the crumbling walls, is the first object which strikes the observer on approaching the village. The general aspect of the Cathedral and village of Iona, with Dun-ii in the background, is faithfully rendered in our first view of the island. The second represents the village, (*Baile Mor*, the Great Town!) as seen from the landing-place. The passengers by the steamer are landed from small boats upon a rude pier, formed of huge masses of gneiss, and

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* *I*, pronounced *Ee*, the old name of Iona, denotes pre-eminently *The Island; Shona* (the *s* silent and the *h* dropped for euphony) means *blessed* or *happy*; hence *I-ona*, the *Blessed* or *Happy Isle*. *Icolmkill*, the Isle of Columba's Cell.

granite boulders drifted from the opposite shore. The visitors no sooner set foot on shore than they are beset by groups of children offering for sale collections of shells (generally *Cypræa Europæa, Trochus umbilicatus,* and *Nerita littoralis*), and water-worn fragments of serpentine, marble, and quartz. This practice is said to have had its origin in the ancient custom of pilgrims carrying away relics from the island as charms. Wordsworth commemorates in a sonnet the greetings of the youthful shell-gatherers, who, sooth to say, drive a hard bargain with the Sassenach, and it is to be feared are somewhat neglectful of school so long as the season for this not unprofitable merchandise lasts :—

> "How sad a welcome! To each voyager
> Some ragged child holds up for sale a store
> Of wave-worn pebbles, pleading on the shore
> Where once came monk and nun with gentle stir,
> Blessings to give, news ask, or suit prefer."

The island is about three miles in length by one and a half in breadth, and is estimated to contain a superficial area of 2,000 imperial acres, 600 of which are in occasional cultivation, the rest being hill pasture, morass, and rock. The Duke of Argyll is the sole proprietor. The population has of late years been reduced by emigration, and numbers about 300.*

The village consists of a row of about forty cottages, forming the "Sraide" or Street. It contains an Established Church (Rev. Mr. M'Gregor) and a Free Church (Rev. Mr. M'Vean). The Free Church minister being about to remove his residence to the opposite coast of Mull, his Manse (Parsonage), is to be converted into an Hotel, thus, by permission of the Duke of Argyle, supplying a want which has long been felt by strangers visiting Iona.

The NUNNERY is usually first visited. Nothing remains of this institution but the chapel. As monastic establishments for females constituted no part of the system of Columba and the Culdees, the Nunnery probably dates no farther back than the beginning of the 13th century. The style of architecture is Norman. The nuns followed the rule of St. Augustine. The tombstone of the Princess Anna, the last prioress, is still preserved, although much defaced

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* For particulars of the ancient history and present condition of the Island, the compiler of these pages takes leave to refer to his little work, entitled "STAFFA AND IONA DESCRIBED AND ILLUSTRATED," published by Blackie & Son, Glasgow, *the profits being applicable to Educational Purposes in Iona.*

by being trodden upon by tourists. It bears date 1543, with an inscription in the Saxon character as follows:—"Hic jacet Domina Anna Donaldi Terliti, filia quondam Priorissa de Iona, quæ obiit anno m° d° xliii°, ejus animam Altissimo commendamus. Sancta Maria, ora pro me." The figure of the prioress is sculptured on the stone, with angels supporting her pillow. In accordance with early Greek and Roman art, the mirror and comb are introduced as the symbol of the female sex, which emblem Pennant mistook for a "plate and comb!" Part of the stone which has been destroyed represented the Virgin Mary. Another mutilated stone is inscribed "Hic jacet Mariota filia Johannis Lauchlani Domini de ——."

MACLEAN'S CROSS occupies a conspicuous place on the rude causeway along which the visitors now proceed on their way to the Cathedral. The original number of the Iona crosses is said to have been 360. According to tradition, the Synod of Argyle caused sixty of the number to be thrown into the sea at the Reformation, when the ecclesiastical edifices in the island were ruthlessly demolished. One of the Iona crosses adorns the town of Campbelton, another that of Inverary. The fragments of several lie scattered in the ancient place of sepulture. Maclean's is considered to be of great antiquity, its form being unique amongst Hebridean crosses. The crosses, which were chiefly of the nature of votive offerings, generally consist of a single slab of mica schist, and the success with which this intractable material has been sculptured is not one of the least curious features of these graceful memorials. The crucifixion is represented on one side of Maclean's cross.

REILIG ORAIN, the burial-place of St. Oran, is perhaps the most interesting spot in Iona, and is unquestionably the most solemnizing. The reputed sanctity of the island obtained for it in a rude age the preference over all other burial-places in Scotland as a place of sepulture, a choice which was doubtless determined also in many instances by the common belief in a Gaelic prophecy of which Pennant furnishes the following English version:—

> "Seven years before the end of the world
> A deluge shall drown the nations.
> The sea at one tide shall cover Ireland
> And the green-headed Islay, but Columba's Isle
> Shall swim above the flood."

Forty Scottish kings are said to have been interred in Iona, from Fergus II. to Duncan I. and his murderer Macbeth; two Irish kings; one French king; two Irish princes of the Norwegian race,

besides innumerable chieftains and ecclesiastics. Donald Monro, Dean of the Isles, who visited Iona in 1594, and describes Reilig Orain, "quhilk is a very fair kirkzaird, and weill biggit about with staine and lyme," concludes an enumeration of the kings and princes "eirdit" in Colmkill as follows:—"Within this Sanctuary also lyes the maist pairt of the Lords of the Iles, with their lynage. Twa Clan Lynes, with their lynage, M'Kynnon and M'Quarie, with their lynage, with sundrie uthers inhabitants of the haill iles, because this Sanctuary wes wont to be the sepulture of the best men of all the iles, and als of our kinges as we have said; because it wes the maist honorable and ancient place that was in Scotland in thair dayes, as we reid."

The tombstones of Reilig Orain are scattered over the islands and neighbouring mainland, having been plundered to cover the narrow dwellings of the dead, as the materials for half the houses of the living in the "Baile Mor" of Iona itself were quarried out of the walls of the ecclesiastical edifices. To quote a remark from "Staffa and Iona Described and Illustrated"—"If it be true, therefore, as Dr. Samuel Johnson observed, that some of the numerous graves in this place 'undoubtedly contain the remains of men who did not expect to be so soon forgotten,' it is not less certain that, elsewhere, the dust of many a humble Hebridean, whose ambition never ventured to prompt the hope of being remembered beyond the first generation, now sleeps in unconscious dignity, in his island sepulchre, under a monument sculptured with the panoply of the potentate or the stole of the ecclesiastic." It is sad to observe, as the present writer has had ample opportunities of doing within the last 20 years, that many of the monuments are becoming defaced in consequence of being habitually trodden upon by visitors. Some of the inscriptions which were legible a few years ago are now completely obliterated. Several sculptured stones of a fissile nature, and which might have been preserved by being placed under shelter, have been split up and destroyed by exposure to the weather, to say nothing of the injury sustained by others, at the hands of relic-hunters and destructives. Many years ago the writer suggested the simple expedient of lifting some of the sculptured stones on end, in the Nunnery and Burying-ground, so as to render it impossible to stand upon them, and of authorising the guide absolutely to prohibit persons from walking over those lying flat on the ground. All warnings of this nature have been disregarded, and the public should know that *the interesting sepulchral and ecclesiastical monuments of Iona are hastening into irretrievable decay.*

St. Oran's Chapel stands within the inclosure of Reilig Orain, a roofless ruin, 60 feet in length by 22 in breadth within the walls. This edifice bears traces of a higher antiquity than any of the other ecclesiastical buildings. Its arched doorway, the soffit of which is ornamented with chevron moulding, and a triple arch in the interior, both of freestone, are of a more recent date than that of the Chapel itself, which is in the Norman style. The triple arch forms a graceful canopy to a tomb whose history is lost, but in which tradition places the remains of St. Oran. The lower part of the cross of Abbot Mackinnon (whose tomb and monument are in the Cathedral) lies below the triple arch, dated 1489, and bearing the figure of a galley with unfurled sails, the emblazonment of a descendant of the ancient Norwegian kings of Man. In the centre of the Chapel is the tomb of M'Quarrie of Ulva, marked by an elaborately decorated stone. The tomb of Macdonald, Lord of the Isles, is also in this sacred spot. The tracery on the stone is designed and executed with great freedom. In this instance the figure of a galley is introduced, with sails furled. The following scroll is inscribed in antique characters:—"Hic jacet corpus Angusii, Filii Domini Angusii MacDomnill de Ila." "Here lies the body of Angus, son of Sir Angus Macdonald of Ilay." This chieftain, who was known by the name of Angus Og, or Young Angus, is Scott's Lord of the Isles, and his genealogy is given in the notes to the poem, where he is more euphoniously designated Ronald—

> "The heir of mighty Somerled,
> Ronald, from many a hero sprung,
> The fair, the valiant, and the young,
> Lord of the Isles, whose lofty name
> A thousand bards have given to fame,
> The mate of monarchs, and allied
> On equal terms with England's pride."

There are many curious old monuments (says Mr. Wilson) within and around St. Oran's Chapel. One of these was found inscribed with the most ancient Irish characters, which a learned clergyman deciphered as a Latin inscription—"MacDonuill fato hic,"—as much as to say that "Fate alone could lay Macdonald low;" while another equally learned Theban reads it simply in the Celtic vernacular, "Cros Domhail fatusich," or in plainer English, "the Cross of Donald Longshanks!"

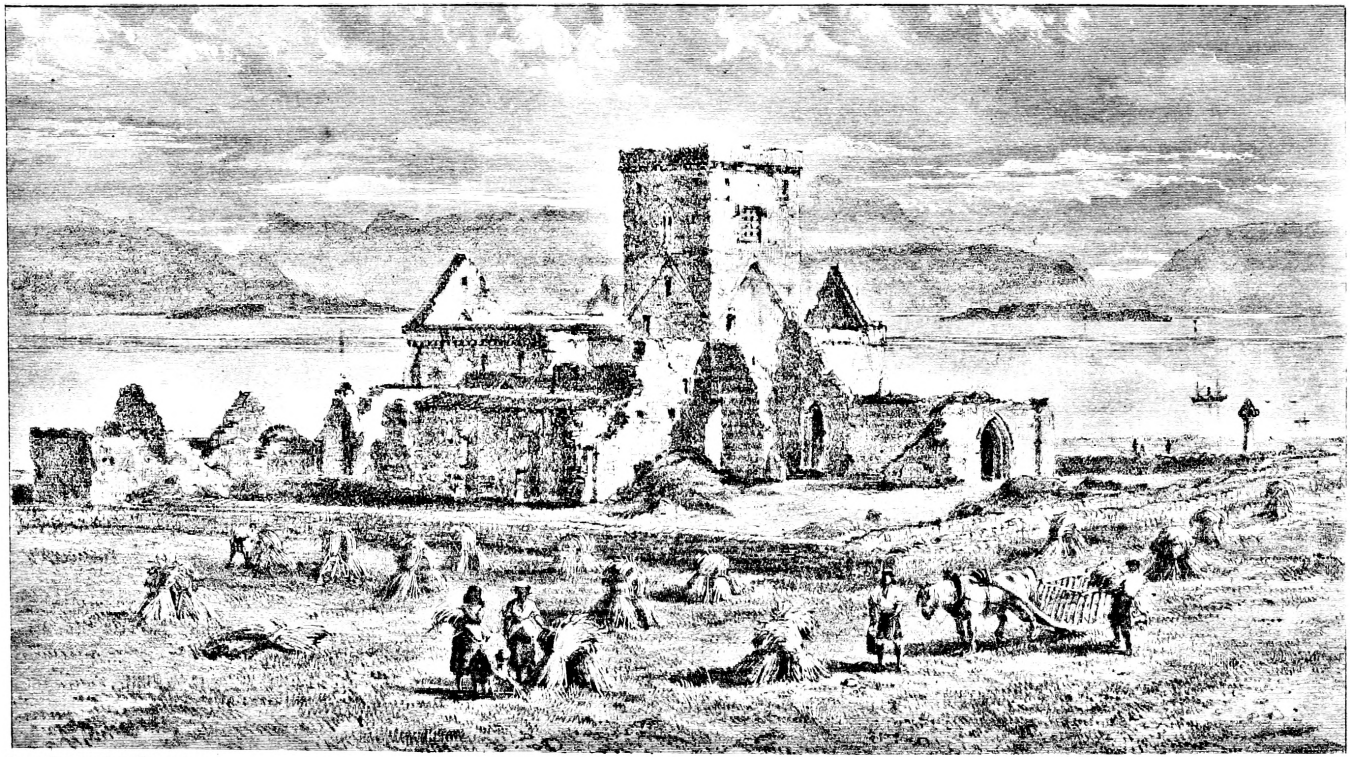
St. Martin's Cross (next to M'Lean's the only perfect surviving specimen of the 360 crosses which contributed so much to the

monumental grandeur of ancient Iona,) stands at the entrance to the Cathedral inclosure, and consists of a solid column of mica schist, fourteen feet high, eighteen inches broad, and six inches thick, and fixed in a massive pedestal of red granite three feet in height. This magnificent column is beautifully carved in high relief with Rhunic knotting, and acquires a still more venerable appearance from its being covered with grey lichens. The west side of the pillar is sculptured with a series of emblematic figures and devices, the circle in the centre of the cross representing the Virgin Mary and Child, surrounded by four rude figures of cherubs. The fragment of a second cross, named St. John's, lies nearer the Cathedral, overthrown from its pedestal; a little to the north there is a broken shaft of a third; and the socket of a fourth crowns the green knoll, named the Abbot's Mound, in front of the Cathedral.

The Cathedral is the most conspicuous and imposing of the ruins of Iona. From whatever point it is seen at a distance—whether from the solid and enduring pile of Staffa, reminding us of the poet's contrast between "ruin and stability," or when it is suddenly descried rising bleak and weather-beaten on the view of the voyager on doubling one of the rugged promontories of Mull, it never fails to fill the mind of the beholder with a solemn and mournful interest. The architecture of the edifice is of different styles, and has been subjected to so many additions and alterations as to render it difficult to assign it to any particular period, although most archæologists concur in regarding it as upon the whole the most recent of the ecclesiastical monuments. Its proportions and appearance are delineated with photographic accuracy in the accompanying picture.

No part of the ecclesiastical relics, as has already been remarked, is traceable to the age of the Culdees.* St. Columba and his twelve companions settled in Iona in the year 563, having crossed the sea from Ireland in a corracle or currach, or boat of wicker-work, and landed at the south end of the island, in a bay still bearing the name of *Port a' Churraich*, or the Bay of the Wicker-boat. A huge mound of stones, having a rude resemblance to a

* The early records of Iona speak of Columba as sending forth his monks to gather "bundles of twigs to build their hospice." The "Cathredal" of the Culdees appears, in fact, to have been constructed of the same materials as the *currach* in which its founders voyaged from Ireland. Wigwams were superseded by log-houses, and in the progress of improvement stone replaced wood as a building material; but the Culdees had taken their final departure from Iona long before the foundation of the present Cathedral, which is believed to date from the 12th or 13th century.



From a Photograph by Thomas Annan

Macbeth & Macdonald Ltd.

CATHEDRAL OF IONA.

boat, indicates the place where the missionaries first set foot on the shores of Iona. The keeping up of the cairn is said by Pennant to have been a penitential service in subsequent and degenerate times. Tradition places the original "cell" or "corner" of the Culdees (Gaelic, *Cuil*, "corner," "retirement," and *Culdeach* or *Cuildich*, "the people who retire to corners,") in an obscure part of the western side of the island, known from time immemorial as the *Carn Cuildich*, or "Cairn of the Retired People," a place too remote to be visited by the ordinary tourist. Vestiges of an ancient edifice are distinctly discernible in this sequestered nook, where no sound is heard save the querulous cry of the sea-bird chiding the intrusion of the wandering pilgrim upon its rocky solitude, and the voice of many waters as it swells and sinks in mournful cadences on the fitful breeze. In this secluded valley the Culdees first planted the standard of the Cross, and set up a tabernacle for the worship of the Most High, preserving as in a casket the purity and simplicity of the faith, till low and lonely Iona, "placed far amid the melancholy main," became illustrious as "the luminary of the Caledonian regions, whence savage clans and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge and the blessings of religion."*

The CATHEDRAL, or as it is variously called St. Mary's Church and the Abbey Church, is a cruciform building, with a square tower at the intersection. The length from east to west is about 160 feet, and that of the transept about 70. The tower is about 70 feet high, and is lighted on one side by a window consisting of a slab perforated with quatrefoils, and on the other by a Catherine-wheel or marigold window, with spirally-curved mullions. The tracery of the windows is by some held to indicate their date to be in the "Decorated period." The transept is entered by an opening in a partition wall of modern origin, and the chancel by another modern wall or screen open at the top, both being coarsely constructed, and very much impairing the effect of the spacious dimensions of the edifice. The aisle (if that part of the ruins so called did not originally constitute one or more small chapels) is

* "The family of Iona," characteristically so called by early writers, suffered grievously from the incursions of Danes and Norwegians. In 801, Iona was burned, and many of the Culdees were barbarously slain. In 805 their foes returned, and "reduced the family of Hij to sixty-four." The island was again invaded in 877, when the Culdees fled to Ireland. Their monastery was anew pillaged in 985, and in 1059 it was destroyed by fire. Still the Culdees clung to a spot consecrated to them by many tender memories. At length the Church of Rome, coveting a place so sacred, erected a monastery in 1203, and then the Culdees departed from Iona never more to return.

separated from the body of the church by plain cylindrical columns, surmounted by short capitals, sculptured with grotesque and ill-executed figures, which are still well defined, although in several instances marred by knavish relic-hunters. Three sedilia remain in the walls, "formed with trefoiled ogee arches, under connected dripstones, which run out afterwards into a horizontal tablet, and have at each apex the remains of what seems to have been a sculptured head." Dr. Sacheverell saw the principal altar in 1688; it measured six feet by four. Martin, in his tour in 1702, speaks of the beauty of its marble. Pennant acknowledges that when he visited the Cathedral in 1772 he and his companions helped to diminish the fragments of it that remained. No vestige of it now exists.

On the north side of the altar is the tomb of Abbot Mackinnon of Iona, who died in the year 1500. The hollow spaces of the letters composing the inscription on the tombstone are said to have been originally filled with silver. The figure of the ecclesiastic is sculptured in high relief, and the workmanship does credit to the art of the period. The monument has been grievously mutilated by tourists. On the opposite side of the chancel is the tomb of Abbot Kenneth Mackenzie, also much defaced. Lightfoot, who accompanied Pennant, found *Byssus purpurea* growing on the tomb of Abbot M'Kinnon. This minute alga, under its modern name of *Callithamnion Rothii*, stains the lower part of both the tombs mentioned, and also the adjacent walls, with its purple patches. In the centre of the chancel is the tomb of Macleod of Macleod, being the largest sepulchral monument in Iona. The figure, an uncouth outline, is sunk into the rock, and was evidently filled up with metal. The great eastern window was a beautiful object, some years ago, even in its dilapidated state. It has lately been built up in the worst possible taste, and is rendered contemptible.

The celebrated "Black Stones of Iona," upon which the Highland chieftains swore an oath in confirmation of contracts and alliances, have long since disappeared. Few relics of ancient times, apart from the ruins, are ever found in the island. Not a vestige of wood employed in the construction of the ecclesiastical and monastic buildings can now be traced, every particle of timber, in an island destitute of trees, having long ago been abstracted by the inhabitants. There being no mill in the island, nor a stream to drive one, and half of the only millstone extant being built into a wall in the north transept, the poorer inhabitants still employ the ancient quern or hand mill, named in Gaelic *Muilean bràdh*.

The Bay of Martyrs, a little to the south of the landing place, deserves a passing notice before leaving the island. This was for ages the landing place of the dead brought to Iona for sepulture. The bay retires upon a green mound, where it was the custom of yore to rest the bier and arrange the ceremonial—observances which are not yet entirely done away. The knoll is known in the native tongue as the "Mound of Burden," or the "Hill of Bearers." In the olden time, when princes and priests, chieftains and lords of the isles were conveyed, like "the gracious Duncan," to Iona for interment,—that "after life's fitful fever" they might "sleep well" in its hallowed mould,—it was here that the funeral pageant was marshalled; and the shores resounded with the melancholy wailings of the *coronach*, and the lamentations of the clansmen for the loss of their chief, as they bore his coffin through the "Street of the Dead" and along the "Narrow Way," to his cell in the consecrated soil of Reilig Orain.

On the occasion of her Majesty's Hebridean voyage, Prince Albert and his suite alone landed at Iona, the Queen remaining on board the royal yacht, which afterwards proceeded to Tobermory Bay, and lay at anchor during the night.

Lists of the birds frequenting Iona, prepared by Mr. H. D. Graham (who also published a series of accurate drawings of the ruins), and lists of the more characteristic plants, by the present writer, are given in the little book already referred to, viz.: "Staffa and Iona Described and Illustrated." Fern-collectors will find on the walls of the ancient buildings *Asplenium Ruta-muraria*, *A. Trichomanes*, *A. Adiantum-nigrum*, and on the rocks *A. marinum*. Only one Hawthorn bush is known in the island! and a dwarf variety of the Oak occurs sparingly. The mosses abound with the remains of ancient trees. Amongst the plants observed in the island may be noted *Pinguicula Lusitanica*, *Cotyledon Umbilicus*, *Thalictrum minus*, *Viola lutea*, *Drosera longifolia*, *Cakile maritima*, *Lythrum Salicaria*, *Anagallis tenella*, *A. arvensis*, *Rhodiola rosea*, *Eryngium maritimum*, *Menyanthes trifoliata*, *Ligusticum Scoticum*, *Lycopsis arvensis*, *Lithospermum maritimum*, *Salix Lapponum*, *Habenaria viridis*, *Scilla verna*, *Rosa spinosissima*, *Ammophila arenaria*, *Triticum junceum*. *Osmunda regalis* occurs amongst the ferns.

The Stormy Petrel breeds in the little isle of Soy, near the south end of Iona, and also in Staffa. The Seal (*Phoca vitulina*) and the Otter (*Mustela lutra*) frequent Iona and Staffa.

The gneiss of Iona is alternated with various schistose rocks, including clayslate and hornblende slate. No mica slate has been found in the island; but slabs of this rock, brought from Mull or the mainland, have been plentifully used in building the Cathedral and adjoining edifices. Near the south end of the island there may be descried from the steamer's deck a broad band of white rock, which is an irregular mass of compact felspar; contiguous to which are the remains of the marble quarry. The marble of Iona is a species of dolomite, or double carbonate of lime and magnesia.

MULL.

The geological interest of the opposite coast of Mull has been much enhanced of late years by the discovery of the Tertiary Leaf-beds at Ardtun Head, first described by his Grace the Duke of Argyll, at the second Edinburgh meeting of the British Association. The island of Mull, as will be observed on the map, forms naturally three great divisions, which Macculloch has described as the northern, middle, and southern trappean districts. The northern consists of terraces of trap rock rising to no great height and possessing no feature of interest. The middle district is that in which the lofty summits of Bentallah and Benmore are conspicuous, rising above the highest level attained by the trap, and consisting, in the case of Benmore at least, of syenite. From the base of Benmore a succession of terraces of trap stretches to the lofty and striking headland of Burg, which rises from the ocean in a succession of horizontal lines in a pyramidal form, till it reaches a height of 2000 feet. The southern division exhibits some of the most magnificent coast scenery in the Hebrides. The cliffs present a continuous line of mural precipices of great elevation, generally resting upon or surmounted by ranges of basaltic pillars of greater or less regularity of form, and including extensive strata of the Oolite and Lias. But on the coast opposite Burg, the trap terminates, an interval of mica-slate succeeds, and the remainder of the promontory forming the Ross of Mull consists of fine red granite, which is quarried for economical purposes.

The headland of Ardtun projects betwixt Loch Scriden and Loch Laigh. Ardtun is mentioned by Dr Johnson as having afforded a resting-place to himself and his fellow-voyagers, when coasting along the shore of Mull from Inchkenneth, on their way to Iona, and the Doctor says that the broken columns of basalt on

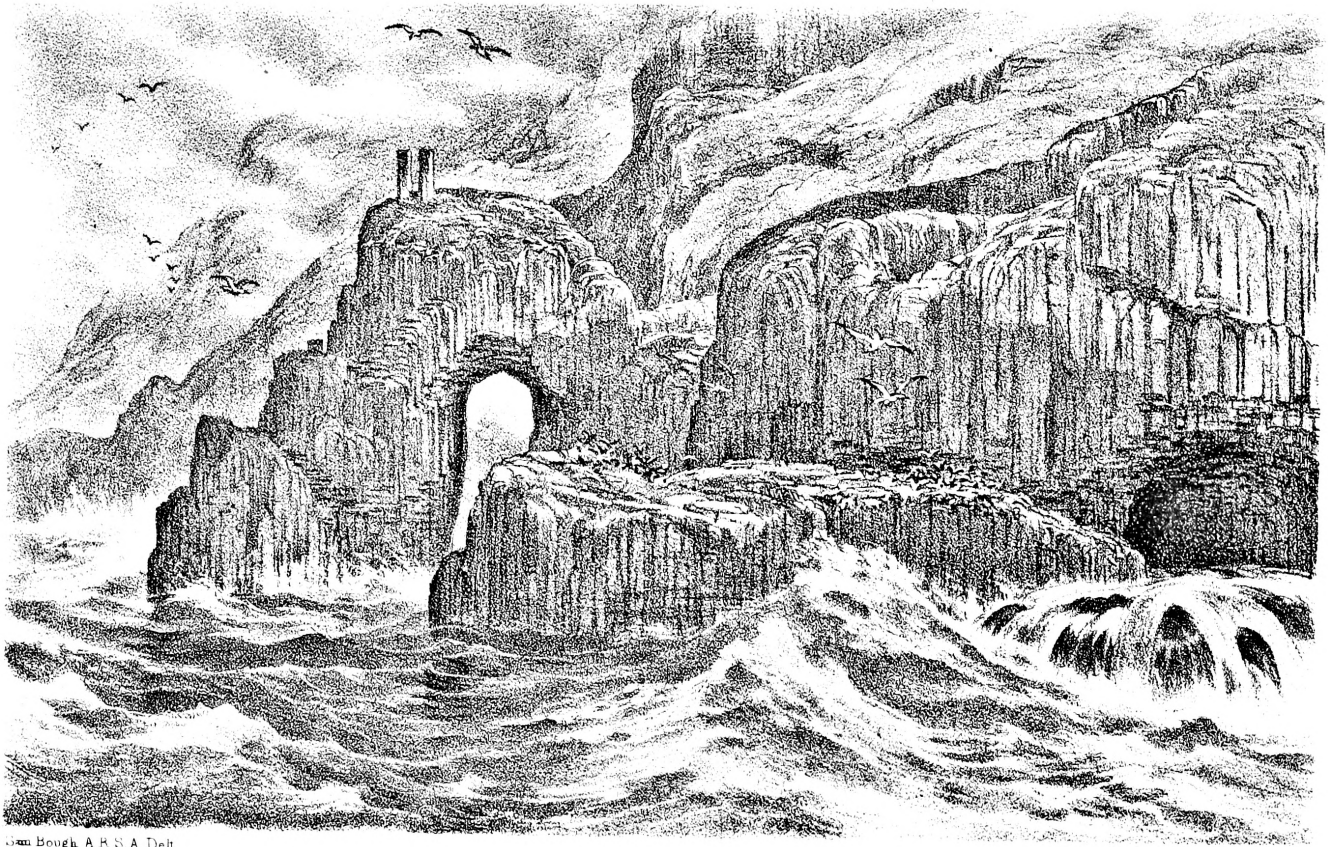
which they sat were pointed out to him by Sir Allan M'Lean as being scarcely less deserving of notice than those of Staffa. The scene of the Duke's discovery is a wild ravine, sloping down to the sea, and bearing the expressive name of *Slochd an Uruisg*, the Goblin's Dell. Macculloch when he visited the place observed only a thin stratum of coal under the trap. Other geologists had also overlooked the leaf-beds. It was reserved for this accomplished nobleman to disclose the important geological fact of these precipitous cliffs inclosing a deposit of the remains of plants belonging "to species and even families which have long ceased to be indigenous in that country, and indicate the occurrence of changes since the period of their growth, not less great in climate than in the geographical forms of land and sea." The cliff yielding these instructive vestiges of an extinct flora, is about 130 feet high, the series of which it consists standing as follows, as measured in feet: —Uppermost basalt, 40; first leaf-bed, 2; first ash-bed, 20; second leaf-bed, 2½; second ash-bed, 7; third leaf-bed, 1½; amorphous basalt, 48; columnar basalt, to level of low tide, 10= 131. The character of the fossil flora determines the geological epoch to which all the beds above the amorphous basalt belong. The leaves are of considerable variety, and all allied to existing families of Dicotyledons. They are therefore remains of the tertiary period, a conclusion further confirmed by the position of chalk flints in the tuff conglomerate with which they are associated. (*Vide* Duke of Argyll's paper on Ardtun Leaf-beds, in Geological Society's Journal.) The late Professor Edward Forbes was of opinion that the assemblage of leaves might probably be referred to the *miocene* stage of the tertiary epoch. The more characteristic of the species are allied to the yew, the plane, and certain ferns. We may mention from personal observation that the difficulty of obtaining specimens from the cliff is almost insurmountable, without means and appliances such as few geologists can carry along with them to the shores of Mull. But the magnificent development of basaltic columns on this coast will alone repay a visit to the wild ravine of the Hobgoblins of Ardtun.

On losing sight of the low green shores of Iona, with their memorable associations, the rugged and dreary point of the Ross of Mull is first passed, and the island of Colonsay, Ornsay, Islay, and Jura come in sight. The steamer now coasts along the southern shores of Mull, where new features of this part of the island appear. However pleasing the coast here may seem to the eye of the passing voyager, when viewed from the steamer's deck in

the sunshine of summer, it may be readily imagined that it will present many a wild scene amidst the storms of winter. A writer in the Statistical Account says that during rain storms, a thousand streams descend from the cliffs of Burg and Gribon, on the other side of the island, and from Inimore and Carsaig which now become conspicuous features of the southern coast. The streams are precipitated from their summits in magnificent cascades, and should a high wind be blowing against them, the water is whirled up in columns like smoke toward the skies, and presents a scene of uncommon sublimity."

Leaving behind the granite of the Ross, as we course along the southern shore, the rocks betwixt Ardnishker and Shiha assume a schistose character, passing into gneiss. At the latter-mentioned point the trap recurs and continues along the coast. Betwixt the lofty cliffs of Inimore and Carsaig the trap overlies a bed of oolitic limestone and sandstone, including coal, the latter, at Carsaig, acquiring a thickness of three feet, although all attempts to work it have proved fruitless. Between Carsaig and Loch Buy the trap is seen underlying as well as overlying the mass of limestone, which between Loch Buy and Loch Spelvie attains a thickness of from 200 to 400 feet, and then forms the entire vertical face of the cliffs, with the exception of a thin layer of trap spread along the upper surface.

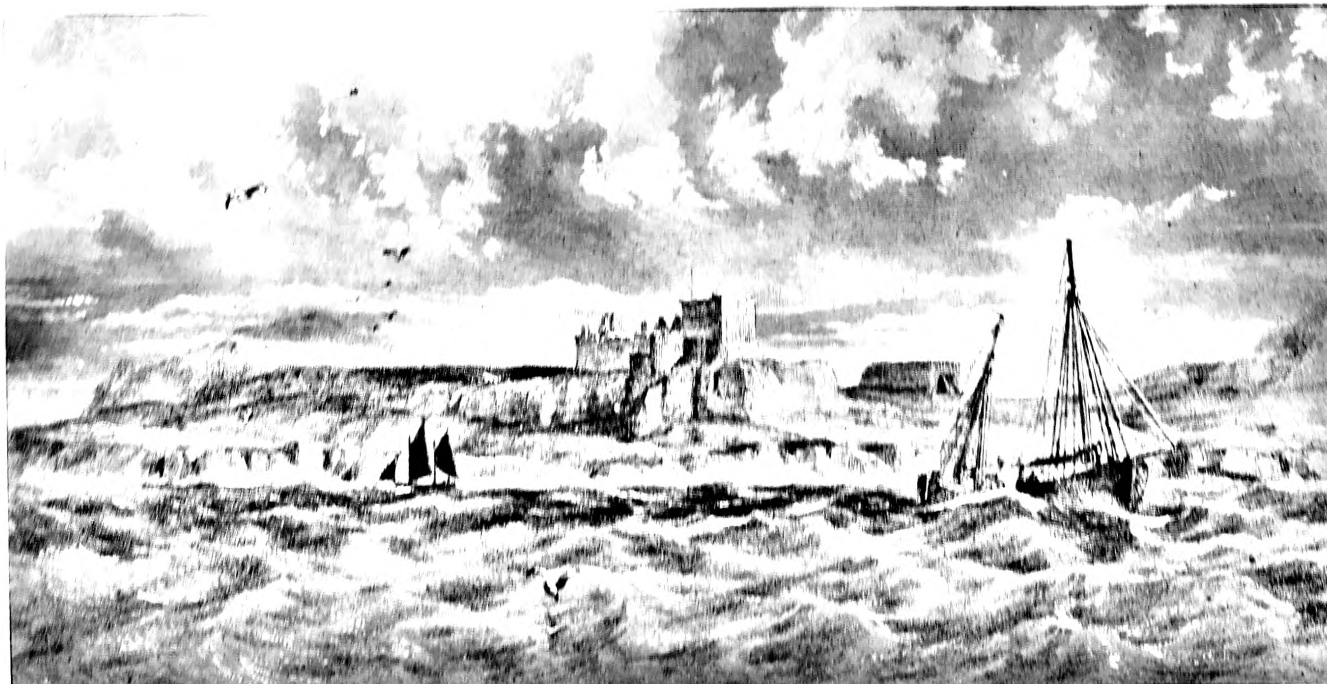
But the most curious objects on this part of the coast are the Carsaig Arches, first described by the late Marquis of Northampton, when Earl Compton, and whose drawing is here copied from the Geological Society's Transactions. The larger arch is called in Gaelic, *Uamh-uill*, or the Perforated Cave, from its being open at both ends. It is about 60 feet high and between 50 and 60 broad, running east and west for about 150 feet. Over the arch is a stratum of basaltic columns of irregular height; and a small grassy knoll of a few feet rises above the columns. The portion of the cliff to which the arched rock is attached, is of basalt, about 400 feet in height, and at about half that elevation it exhibits irregular ranges of columns inclining in different directions. The smaller arch is named *Bidda vich Re Lochlin*, from a Norwegian Prince having perished here. The rock is isolated, narrow, and lofty, standing to the west of the larger arch. It is about 120 feet in height, the arch being about 70 feet high, and only a few feet in length. The direction of the cave is north and south. The rock is surmounted by a solitary basaltic pillar. The sea washes through both these arches at high water, and they are seen to most advantage when



Sam Bough, A.R.S.A. Delt.

Maclure & Macdonald, lith.

CARSAIG ARCHES, MULL.



Sam Bough A.R.S.A. Del.

McClure & Macdonald Lith.

DUART CASTLE, MULL.

left dry by the tide. The coast scenery here becomes truly majestic—till passing from the frowning headlands of Mull into the romantic windings of the Sound of Kerrera, with its sweet recesses and picturesque homesteads amidst the shelter of surrounding trees, we hail at last the venerable pile of Dunolly, and sweep into the bay of Oban.

DUART AND ARDTORNISH CASTLES.

The following historical notices of the two most notable Castles in the Sound of Mull, have been obligingly furnished by Mr. J. B. Simpson, Glasgow:—

DUART.

Duart is laid down in the ancient parochial map of Scotland as Dowart, and like many other fastnesses of the same character has a sad tale to tell of oppression and cruelty. Time kindly throws a mantle of softened oblivion over those ruthless strongholds, and enables us to forget their former lawlessness in their present picturesque decay.

One of those cruel tales is told in connection with Duart in a little volume, published in 1764, from a MS. written in the reign of James VI.

The story is of Sir Lachlan Maclean who occupied the family castle of Duart in 1586. Sir Lachlan appears to have coveted other possessions besides the family residence of Duart and the property in Mull connected with it.

Might was considered right in those rude days. An unfortunate Hebridean islander who might stray from that portion of the archipelago which called him Lord, had much more to dread than the dangerous narrow channels or sounds by which the islands are divided. Let him land and he must take the chance of reprisals for some old feud, or sad to say, as in the present instance, a treacherous disregard of hospitality and the ties of kindred.

But to our story. At the above date the laird of Duart, who was the chief of Maclean, had determined to acquire property so far away from his patrimony as the south-west portion of the Island of Islay, the old document calls it the "Kinnes of Ila," and in order to possess this distant territory he seized his brother-in-law who came for the purpose of trying to bring about a reconciliation regarding a feud with another kinsman.

Maclean does not appear to have violated the laws of hospitality on account of the praiseworthy errand upon which his brother-in-law visited him, but solely to possess himself of the Islay property, and a most summary proceeding he made of it, seizing upon the person of his friend and confining him in Duart Castle "*there to end his days*," unless he made over the property to this determined Duart despot.

This was accordingly done by the luckless proprietor, who left his two brothers prisoners in Duart Castle as hostages for the fulfilment of his doubtless very unwilling bargain.

We need not follow the story through all its cruel details, what we have given will serve to show how much more comfortable it is to see the old Castle of Duart in its present state than we might have found it had we lived in the time of the lawless Sir Lachlan, with all his varied ways of *makin his freends sicker*, in this now tottering stronghold.

Another account states, that Maclean married the daughter of the Islay proprietor, who agreed to give the disputed property as her portion. But this does not make the matter much better, the Duart captive would have as little chance of escape from the fortress whether his daughter or his sister were the spouse of its lawless lord.

Islay and Mull appear in ancient times to have been convenient objects of transfer wherewith the reigning sovereign might reward or purchase the services of dominant chieftains, and the laird of Islay, presuming upon ancient right, might have seized the person of the Duart castellan had he found him in his insulated territory, seeing that about the year 1314 King Robert Bruce granted the Island of Mull to Angus of Isla. I suspect this is the first literary document bearing upon the Island of Mull. It would be needlessly circumstantial to go over all the succeeding well authenticated matters connected with it, more particularly as it is with its stout Castle of Duart to which our present enquiry is confined.

The castle is said to have been of Danish origin, but whether this is the case or not, we have only the tradition (so far as I am aware) to rely upon. In 1390 we step upon sure ground, for then, upon the authority of the Great Seal Register, was the Castle of Duart granted "by Donald of Ile, Lord of the Isles, to Lachlan Makgillean." Dundoward is the name which the castle bears in the *Forduni Scotichronicon*. It appears to have been possessed by the family of Maclean before they acquired the larger properties in the island. They are called the Makilanès of Dowart, in 1517, when the Regent of Scotland grants them an increase of their possessions; and in 1542, Hectoure M'Clane of Dowart gets permission from James V. to visit him at Edinburgh, "vnhurt, vnharmit, vnattechit, vnarrestit, vniornait, vncallit, vnpersewit, vnvexit, vandistrublit."

This most secure *salvus conductus* was doubtless very necessary to the chieftain of Duart, whose rather unauthorised proceedings, like that of many a Highland neighbour, would always keep a plentiful sprinkling of enemies afloat, who would deem it a perfect windfall to seize and retaliate upon such an active and vexatious chieftain as the laird of Duart.

ARDTORNISH.

In regard to Ardtornish you will observe what an important place it was about 400 years ago (1461), when the possessor of it "John of Yle," with all the pomp of sovereignty, enters into an agreement with the King of England to assist him in the subjugation of Scotland. We lowlanders would have had little cause to remember with anything like gratitude the Ardtornish chief had he succeeded in carrying out his intentions, which curiously enough come down to us in an English record. The charter chest of Ardtornish has doubtless seen many a vicissitude since 1461, but the *Rotuli Scotiæ*, preserved in the Tower of London and the chapter house of Westminster, have retained for us the account of the singular intended undertaking. Had it succeeded the men of Morven might have exercised their highland hospitality in Dirleton, Borthwick, or Tantallan, any lowland baronial residence, in short, which suited their fancy might have been exchanged for the storm-begirt Ardtornish.

I am afraid it will not be possible to fix anything like a date for the building of Ardtornish Castle. So early as 1390, however, the Great Seal Register records a charter granted by "Donald of Ile, Lord of the Isles, at his Castle of Ardthoranis," and succeeding documents continue to exhibit vitality in the old house till the 17th century when the place becomes the property of our old friends the Macleans of Duart.

2 camels [illegible] over a [illegible]
fire – Certain [illegible]
horseback always [illegible]
family when dying. – Green
pebble – good luck aft. [illegible]
Children selling pebbles, Shells, [illegible]
urchin. – [illegible] over "[illegible] in
development" sometimes 25 houses [illegible]
Argyll Hotl.
Pabba Is. [illegible] – [illegible]
Shell & Sand [illegible]
Man saw rat. People believed [illegible]
make rats. – Burying ground, [illegible]
bones laid bare by sand blowing off. – Signs
before death – 2nd sight. Ship. Woman
out of sea. – In Barra mostly Papists.
[illegible] will return. –
[illegible] one [illegible]
story [illegible]

INDEX.