

one German against all Germany, had simply and sublimely indicated the identity of his doctrine with his nature, by declaring that he not merely *would* not, but *could* not, recant.

And whom could he not abjure? Does not this question point to Him who is the central Person and Power of the past eighteen hundred years of history?—to Him who will be the cen-

tral Person and Power of the whole future of history?—to Him who came into the world in the form of a young man, and whom a young man announced, crying in the wilderness?—to Him who clasps in his thought and in his love the whole humanity whose troubled annals history recounts, and who divinized the spirit of youth when He assumed its form?

AROUND MULL.

PART I.

I.

WE had come from Dumbarton, (my temporary home,) the Baillie, Christie, and I, for a week's tour along the western coast and among the Highlands. Sallying forth from Strathleven cottage one sunny morning in August, we had footed it to the river-side, (I learned the full use of my feet in Scotland.) had stepped on board a wee bonnie boat, just large enough for us and our light baggage, exclusive of the space occupied by a single oarsman,—and dropping down the Leven, and past the Castle, had gained the broad Clyde, drifted into mid-stream, and there, lying on our oars, had patiently waited until the great puffing steamer of the Hutcheson line, from Glasgow, hove in sight. Then, raising one oar as a signal, we had hailed the monster, which, condescendingly relaxing her speed, had suffered our boat, tossing like a feather on the steamer's mighty swell, to come in palpitating, timid fashion under the shadow of her paddle-box, where the strong arms of men stationed on the portable ladder let down from her side had caught our skiff by the prow and held the inconstant thing for one instant firmly enough to suffer us to spring to their precarious stairway and so secure our passage to

Ardrihaig. Thence, after two hours' sail by track-boat through the Crinan Canal, and a second passage by steamer,—literally an ocean passage, for it took us out into the deep Atlantic,—we had bent our course awhile among the islands that lie nearer the rocky shore, and had at length, just at nightfall, gained the little land-locked harbor of Oban,—sweet, smiling Oban, nestling securely within her rocky bulwarks, the glistening curve of her white sea-wall, her little fleet of safely moored vessels, her clustering cottages, her neat tempting inns, all challenging our wonder and delight, as, skirting the headland which had hitherto jealously hidden the mimic seaport, the entire picture flashed instantaneously on our view.

Nothing in this hospitable spot turns its back on the voyager who there seeks refuge. The sea-wall curving like a half-moon round the bay, and the pebbled esplanade above it, occupy all the foreground. The principal street of Oban skirts this artificial quay, where the shipping of the place lies at anchor, and on its farther side the buildings all front the sea. Thus the whole place smiles a welcome; its white garniture—for everything in Oban seems freshly whitewashed—reflects the last rays of the western sunlight, or, if night has already clothed the neighboring islands

and headlands in gloom, the lights from the numerous windows of the dwelling-houses, shops, and hotels, which face you as you make the port, excite a glad surprise, and promise the weary traveller, what he is sure to find, shelter, comfort, and good cheer in Oban.

More than these I found there; for, leaving the spot always in the morning to pursue our excursions, and returning thither on successive occasions at night-fall, the charm of the place grew upon me, until I came to view it not merely as a refuge from exposure and fatigue, a nook screened and protected by Nature's benediction from wintry storms and Hebridean gloom, but as a sanctum for the spirit, an ideal resting-place for restless souls,—a place to be loved and longed for forevermore. If I have said too much, and you convict me of romance and exaggeration, fellow-travellers, who like me have sometimes made this haven, then sunlight and moonlight and soft breezes and sweet sounds have been kinder to me than to you, and you did not see Oban in the light and the air that I did.

One would scarcely expect, judging from the size of the town, that Oban could contain more than a single comfortable inn; still, besides the Caledonian Hotel, of which alone I can testify from experience, there are at least two or three similar public-houses, and I know not how many lodging-houses of lesser pretension; for Oban is the centre of no little travel, and is the rallying-point and rendezvous for tourists, especially during the months of August and September, the popular season in the Highlands.

At the Caledonian, an hotel not dissimilar to our best summer resorts in the White Mountains and other picturesque districts, we were comfortably, I may say luxuriously, entertained. The accommodations, as with us, included ladies' parlor and *table d'hôte*, and, after a brief lounge in the former and a substantial meal at the latter, we were ready to set forth for an evening stroll through the town, a stroll never omitted by us at that hour in Oban, a delightful

and essential sedative after the fatigues or excitements of the day,—strolls the charm of which I could never quite define, and the impression from which is incommunicable. There would seem to be little that was pleasant or memorable in our perambulations of the main street of a little fishing-town,—the Bailie, with his stump of a pipe for company, always choosing the esplanade, while Christie and I as frequently idled along the opposite pavement, pausing now and then at the little shop-windows and gazing at their mean or meagre displays, illumined by a farthing candle, with a keener zest than I had ever experienced in the Rue Rivoli or the Palais Royal. Our walk rarely extended beyond either extremity of this street; it was uniform, monotonous, unvaried by any more striking incident than a plunge into the most humble and ill-furnished of the shops to procure a penny pipe for the Bailie, whose smoky stump had accidentally come to grief, or a continuation of our stroll as far as the remotest point of the arc formed by the quay, where, seated on a wall of rough stones, we took in at one glance the moonlit bay, and the quiet, peaceful town, scarce a hum from which reached our ears, so hushed and still was the place at this hour.

A couple of little girls of true Gaelic blood came and gazed curiously at us one evening, as we thus sat. The elder of the two, a head shorter than her companion, responded readily to the Bailie's questions,—among other things naïvely accounted to us for her diminutive size, as if it were a foregone and inevitable result of her lot, by the grave statement, "Oh, I am the eldest, Sir; I tended all the rest"; and then, at his request, they united in singing us a genuine Erse song, the guttural accents of which, softened by their childish tongues, harmonized wonderfully with the Hebridean landscape, redeemed from its otherwise rigidity and gloom by Oban gleaming like a pearly jewel from its rude setting of stone. It was the only incident that I can recall connected with our moonlight ramblings.

Was it not, perhaps, the absence of incident or adventure, the holy calm, the unbroken stillness of the scene, that lulled our hearts then to pensive musings, and that still whispers to our memories, "Peace"?

The Caledonian, though it found room for us, was wellnigh overflowing with visitors. Besides our fellow-passengers and those of another steamer of the same line, which had arrived almost simultaneously from the northern or opposite direction, there were not a few who had either been waiting in Oban, or had returned thither from some excursion in the neighborhood, to be in readiness for the first opportunity for a voyage around Mull. This trip, which occupies twelve hours, is during the travelling season advertised for every alternate day; but, as the pleasure, oftentimes the possibility, of the excursion is dependent on wind and weather, persevering tourists are often detained for a week or more in default of sunshine and a fair breeze. The elements on the morning after our arrival being in all respects favorable, the great household was early astir. Though breakfast is served on board the luxurious pleasure-boat, we preferred to rise at the earliest notice and make all possible haste with our toilets, for the sake of breakfasting on terra firma. Many were of the same mind with ourselves; and the crowded tables, the good-natured jostling of elbows, and the eager scrambling for food, with the bells of variously bound steamers at the neighboring pier already ringing out their warning, exhilarated us with a sense of companionship and excited us to activity. Indeed, the analogy which I detected between hotel life in the Highlands and in our own country may have been partly due to these hasty breakfasts, which the necessity of securing a long day rendered as inevitable to tourists as hurriedly bolted meals so often are to travellers on our interminable routes, or to our time-saving business-men of callous digestion.

After all, we had the mortification of feeling that we had been deceived like children and huddled like sheep as an

atonement for the sluggishness or obstinacy of that less alert and punctual class of travellers who, as the experience of steamboat agents had proved, could be aroused only by successive bell-rings and repeated threats of a forfeited passage. We had some compensation and revenge, however, as, seated in our early secured best places, we watched our fellow-excursionists come straggling on board.

The Pioneer, strongly built for service in the open sea, and of ample dimensions, must have boasted this day something like two hundred passengers. So ample were the accommodations, so widely scattered the parties, that I should scarcely believe the number to have been so considerable, but for my vivid recollection of the successive and, as it seemed, never-ending boat-companies, each of a dozen or more, that were rowed ashore at the points where we made land. Of course there was but a fractional part of these people whose individuality made any impression on me. In one respect we were a unit: all were pleasure-seekers, and the Pioneer, unlike most of the steaming monsters which ply on regular routes, was dedicated to beauty, sacred to the adventurous and the picturesque. She carried no mail; she was destined to none of the ends of traffic or profit. Her freight was all human, Nature was her mistress, and the love of Nature her inspiration and motive-power.

But as she lay there at the pier, puffing off steam and ringing perpetual bells, she gave evidence of business-like impatience; and her human cargo, as they came on board, had scarcely yet awakened to any other emotions than those of unwillingness and discomfort. Some were yet chewing the cud of unfinished breakfasts, the crumbs of which still clung to their garments; others had the blue, ghostly look of unwonted early risers, shivering with the chill morning air and the faint heart which a fasting stomach entails; some, the latest comers of all, were quite breathless, and were nervously holding on to the gloves, veils, shawls, or over-shoes caught up

at the last moment and only half put on or adjusted.

Here comes a party of young people, however, lads and lasses, whose high spirits triumph over all the inconveniences of the hour, and who, as they rush laughingly on board, seem to defy the steamer to have started without so important an addition to the joyousness of the occasion as they represent. A group of elderly Scotch folk, anxious, bewildered, and fussy, are congratulating themselves, on the contrary, that they are just in time and "weel ower" the perils of embarkation. Here is a sal-low clergyman whose dress and expression proclaim him an English churchman; he and his cadaverous wife, who seems, from her slightly pretentious air, to have, as the English say, "blood" (a very little blood I should judge in this case); both have a worn and melancholy appearance, which is, I suspect, chronic, and not wholly due to the occasion. And, why, whom have we here? we have certainly seen those girls before, who are hurrying across the plank just as the last bell is ringing its last stroke. Yes, to be sure, they are the same trio whom we found on board the steamer which we took at Inversnaid on Loch Lomond, one day, when we were returning toward sunset from a visit to Loch Katrine and the Trosachs. Christie and I remember them perfectly, they and their young brother seated in a picturesque group on the little upper deck, each with open sketch-book copying Nature at the moment, or carrying out some design conceived earlier in the day; their mother, the same self-poised mammoth Englishwoman of marvellous physique and perfect equanimity of forces who accompanies them to-day, seated at a little distance, the occasional superintendent and invariable referee of their work and progress. Their "papa" is of the party this time, — a tall, gray-haired gentleman, old enough to be venerable, young enough to have the promise of half a score of years or more yet in which to serve his country, — a gentleman whose sweet dignity and serene self-possession entitle him at a

glance to the encomium once bestowed involuntarily by some English friends of mine upon one of our gifted historians, "Why, he might be a duke!" Our fellow-traveller was only Sir Thomas, however, — Sir Thomas Somebody, — I have forgotten what, a London baronet, holding some high office or other under Government. We may imagine it anything we please, for I have forgotten that too. Indeed, the little we ever knew of him was learned at a later day, I suspect, from a buxom lawyer's wife, up North with her husband for the vacation, and who, as well as Sir Thomas's family, was of our travelling company on an ensuing journey, and had her little gossip with Christie. Other acquaintance than that of accidental companionship we never had with any of the Pioneer's passengers; but what a charm there is in that involuntary knowledge one comes to have of these chance fellow-travellers whom we meet, pass, fall behind, and come up with again, until they become at last familiar features of our route!

But we have been long enough getting on board. It is well that these laggards are the last, for it is high time we were off.

The wind being fair for our purpose, we are able to take the northern course and commence the circuit of the island by striking directly for the Sound of Mull, much the most favorable route, as it introduces the traveller at once to some of the most picturesque objects of the excursion.

The first of these, standing like a sentinel to the land-locked bay of Oban, is Dunolly Castle, which commands the bold promontory around which we bend our course, as, emerging from our little harbor, we gain the comparatively open sea. The only remnant of this once proud dwelling of the Lords of Lorn which remains entire is the old mossy tower or keep, around which are grouped numerous ivy-grown fragments, attesting the former greatness of a stronghold whose chieftain once had power to defy and defeat Robert Bruce. Many are the traditions and associations that

cluster about this spot, but none, perhaps, more ancient and suggestive than that which still points out the Clach-na-cau, or the Dog's Pillar,—a huge, upright pillar, a detached fragment of rock,—which stands at the very edge of the promontory, and which is still pointed out as the stake to which Fingal, chief of the race of Morven, mighty in the hunt as well as in battle, was accustomed to bind his white-breasted Bran, that “long-bounding son of the chase.” “Raise high the mossy stones of their fame,” sang the poet of Scandinavian heroes. The fame of the huntsman and hound “is in the desert no more”; but as “the sons of the feeble” pass along, they see, as did Fingal at the tomb of Ryno, “how peaceful lies the stone of him who was the first at the chase!”

But we may not pause to muse upon Dunolly, with its dreams of other days. As we sweep round the base of the promontory, a scene bursts on our view so wildly grand that any single feature of the imposing landscape shrinks abashed and owns its insignificance. We are making direct for the entrance to the Sound of Mull; but behind and to the north of us is stretched out a panorama of rock and hill and deeply indented coast of incomparable grandeur. To the left of us rise the rugged and desolate shores of Mull, while far away to the northeast extends the lofty range of dark, resounding Morven,—the prospect in that direction terminated and crowned by the huge and precipitous Cruachan Ben, while in a more northerly direction the Adnamurchan Hills shut in our horizon.

And when, at length, the eye is satisfied with gazing on the prospect in its entirety, one after another, the moss-grown fortresses and other hoary relics of ancient Erse architecture claim our reverent attention; for the Hebridean chieftains, an amphibious race, almost invariably chose the extreme verge of ocean-precipice for the site of their fortresses, thus securing facilities for friendly communication, and defence against the attacks of hostile clans. Dunstaffnage, though left some distance to our

right, is still sufficiently in view for us to discern its regal proportions. On the opposite shore, and farther up the coast, glimpses may be had here and there of many a solitary tower,

“that, steep and gray,
Like falcon-nest, o'erhangs the bay.”

And as Imagination travels on, she sees each misty eminence crowned with its airy castle, its ancient beacon,—

“Each on its own dark cape reclined,
And listening to its own wild wind,
From where Mingarry, sternly placed,
O'erawes the woodland and the waste,
To where Dunstaffnage hears the raging
Of Connal with his rocks engaging.”

But that we are bound to the steamer's track, we should be continually darting off our course to explore the deep indentations of island and coast, many of which are the entrances to romantic inland lochs. Could we spread white sails to the winds of Morven, and linger at pleasure in this picturesque region, we should leave no haunted castle or lonely watch-tower unexplored, from Castle Stalker, on its island-rock, to Kinloch-Aline, on the copsy bank of Loch Aline, “one of the most picturesque of the Highland castles,” so says the Guide-book, and one which brought material reward to its builder too; for tradition tells us that it was built by Dubh-Chal, an Amazon of the Clan McInnes, who paid the architect with *its bulk in butter*. What a dairy-woman, as well as warrior, must this Dubh-Chal have been in her day! And what a fortune this architect would have realized, could he have lived in ours!

We are now entering the Sound of Mull; and on our left, at the easternmost point of the island, Duart Castle, which commands the entrance to the Sound, looks down upon us from its rocky promontory. We have just passed the Lady Rock, which, bare and black at ebb-tide, but wave-washed at high-water, is the scene of a legend which has given a wicked notoriety to one of the ancient lairds of this same Duart. It gave rise to Campbell's poem of “Glenara,” and forms the basis of Joanna Baillie's tragedy of “The Family

Legend." But we have neither at hand to consult at this moment, even if the steamer would pause to indulge us in literary pastime; so we must wait the leisure of some winter evening for poem and tragedy, and content ourselves with the prose account given by James Wilson, (the Professor's brother,) which is as much as we can digest *en passant*.

From this it seems that "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 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."

Next comes, on our right, Ardtornish Castle,

"on her frowning steep,
'Twixt cloud and ocean hung,"

the opening scene of Scott's "Lord of the Isles," and the stronghold of that hero chieftain. It is now, for the most part, in ruins. One old keep, or tower, still remains standing: the same, perhaps, of which Sir Walter says, —

"The turret's airy head,
Slender and steep and battled round,
O'erlooked, dark Mull, thy mighty Sound,
Where thwarting tides with mingled roar
Part thy swarth hills from Morven's shore."

And if we would form a conception of the inaccessible character of this and similar ocean-washed fortresses, we have but to recall the poet's description of the approach to it by Bruce and his companions on the seaward side: —

"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 manned,
And plunged them in the deep."

Other ancient castles meet our view, both on the right and left, during the passage of the Sound. None of these rough, but romantic ruins constitute the present residence of their owners, who could be better accommodated in the poorest fishing-hut. They serve, however, to give interest and dignity to the modern residence or miniature village which nestles demurely under the shelter of their pristine fame. At Tobermory, or the Well of Mary, the metropolis of Mull, the steamer stops to deposit and receive passengers, — this, and one or two other pauses for a similar practical purpose, constituting, in favor of a few chance travellers, an exception to her otherwise strict character of an excursion- or pleasure-boat. Indeed, in the eyes of the Islanders, the services she thus renders may constitute her a business agent, though we tourists, being so much in the majority, recognize her only in her festive and recreative capacity. And, after all, who knows but this scheme of touching at Tobermory originated in the design to accommodate us with the lovely view which is presented by the picturesque, straggling town, its terraced walks, its green copses, and its mountainous background and

inclosure, which combine to form the landscape that greets us as we enter the little bay?

II.

WE leave Tobermory and the shelter of the Sound almost simultaneously; and now, as we emerge into open ocean, the long wave of the Atlantic, on which the steamer is rolling, no less than the grand ocean prospect, unbroken, except by the numerous small islands among which our course lies, betrays the fact that we are getting out to sea. We have passed the westernmost extremity of the main land, and are outside of and beyond the great island whose circuit we are making. The romantic and legendary character of the scenery has now given place to the sublime; and, the attention no longer diverted by a succession of objects close at hand, we can give ourselves uninterruptedly to the contemplation of Nature in her grandeur. The chief objects of our voyage are already dawning upon us. As we pass the Point of Callioch, a stormy headland on the northeastern shore of Mull, we share the experience of the poet Campbell, who, living for some months in his youth as a tutor at Sunipol House, just in this neighborhood, wrote to a friend, "The Point of Callioch commands a magnificent prospect of thirteen Hebrid islands, among which are Staffa and Icolmkill, which I visited with enthusiasm." Thus we have the poet's warrant, as well as that of travelers and sages of many centuries, for the enthusiasm with which we had embarked on an excursion, the principal objects of which were Staffa and its far-famed Fingal's Cave, and Icolmkill, otherwise the sacred island of Iona.

But these objects of engrossing interest are still far off in the distance. Staffa, the smaller and nearer of the two, presents but an unimposing front from the quarter by which we approach, being oval in form, low, and with a gently undulating surface, in which respect it does not differ materially, except in its

dimensions, from the inferior islands among which we are steering our course, and which, cold, bald, and of a monotonous and desolate uniformity, betray their near relationship to the conical, heather-covered hills of the Highlands. It almost seems, indeed, as if these islands were some old acquaintances of the mainland, which have slipped their moorings and drifted out to sea. A sense of loneliness and melancholy steals over one amid this bleak, wild scenery, — a sense of having one's self drifted away from the haunts of men, almost from those of vegetation, so much sameness is there in the landscape, so little of promise or growth on the soil. No wonder that Dr. Johnson, to whom London streets and atmosphere alone were congenial, and who brought with him to the Hebrides his strong antipathy to everything Scotch, was often a prey to discontent and murmuring in these latitudes, and that in a moment of ill-humor he should have exclaimed to Boswell, — "Oh, Sir, a most dolorous country!" No wonder, that, his suspicions excited by the nakedness of the land and his preconceived notions of Scotch cupidity, he should, on occasion of losing his stout oaken stick, while crossing the Island of Mull on a Highland sheltie, have vowed to Boswell that it had been stolen by the natives, justifying the charge by the argument, — "Consider, Sir, the value of such a piece of timber here!"

Campbell, so his biographer tells us, "felt the loneliness of his situation at Sunipol House acutely at first, though he soon became reconciled to a country which, though bleak and wild, was peculiarly romantic and nourished the poetry in his soul." Even a creature of a lower order than philosophers, poets, or even us poor tourists, has been known to feel the chilling influence of Nature in these her wildest forms, and though weaned from softer airs, perhaps reconciled to its stern lot, has cherished in its innermost bosom a memory so warm, so strong, as to assert itself at last with a force that fired and burst the little breast in which it

had unconsciously smothered. Witness Campbell's little poem, "The Parrot," the incident of which he learned in the Island of Mull, from the family to whom the bird belonged, — an incident which inspired the poet to a strain so touchingly sweet that I cannot resist the temptation to quote it entire.

"The deep affections of the breast,
That Heaven to living things imparts,
Are not exclusively possessed
By human hearts.

"A parrot from the Spanish Main,
Full young, and early caged, came o'er
With bright wings to the bleak domain
Of Mulla's shore.

"To spicy groves where he had won
His plumage of resplendent hue,
His native fruits and skies and sun,
He bade adieu.

"For these he changed the smoke of turf,
A heathery land and misty sky,
And turned on rocks and raging surf
His golden eye.

"But, petted, in our climate cold
He lived and chattered many a day,
Until, with age, from green and gold
His wings grew gray.

"At last, when, blind, and seeming dumb,
He scolded, laughed, and spoke no more,
A Spanish stranger chanced to come
To Mulla's shore.

"He hailed the bird in Spanish speech ;
The bird in Spanish speech replied,
Flapped round his cage with joyous screech,
Dropped down, and died."

If perfect sunshine, gentle breezes, and a smooth sea could lure one into unconsciousness of the surrounding desolation and into forgetfulness of the elemental warfare to which these Hebridean regions are exposed, we had complete antidotes to melancholy or dread, so perfect was the day chosen for our excursion ; and yet I never think of that part of our passage in which we threaded the islands lying north of Staffa without a gentle shade of sadness mingling with my recollections. But that the sage Johnson, the romantic Campbell, and the unreflecting parrot all indorse these emotions as instinctive, I should feel bound in honor (honor to the landscape) to ascribe them to that occasional thrill of homesickness which I have known take possession of me in the crowded

streets of London or Edinburgh as well as here, making me inwardly exclaim, like the old woman from the wilds of Vermont, on her first visit to the metropolis, "All this may be very fine, but I wonder the folks can bear to live so far away."

That I was the victim of a momentary sense of exile is rendered the more probable from the fact that about this time Christie was stretched in the cabin below, a victim to sea-sickness, in spite of the comparatively smooth sea, and that the Bailie had gone forward to smoke a pipe, thus leaving me alone with my meditations. That they were not wholly of the regretful or sentimental cast is evident, however, from the fact that I improved this opportunity to indulge in more than one observation upon the company, my gossip (that is, my imagination) and I making many a little comment on my human surroundings, especially those three specimens of English girls whom, as I had met them once before, I was beginning to recognize as acquaintances.

And what we commented on them, I and another friendly gossip, namely, memory, often rehearse ; for that trio still stand out to my recollection as excellent, let us hope average, types of English maidenhood of the best blood and breeding, — blood not a whit purer, to my thinking, than flows in any honest veins, — breeding no higher than may be attained in the humblest household in which Christian politeness is the ruling standard.

"How pretty they were !" says Memory.

I. Yes, — just pretty enough to gladden a mother's heart now and a lover's by-and-by, but mercifully sparing us those ecstasies on their beauty which are so tiresome.

Memory. Theirs was chiefly the beauty of youth, health, and happiness ; they were all well-featured, though, and had faces which grew more and more interesting on acquaintance.

I. How hard it was to distinguish them one from another !

Memory. Yes, at first. But you must

recollect that on closer observation one proved to be the taller, one the plumper, and one decidedly the younger of the three; then, although they were dressed so exactly alike, — according to what must be, I suspect, a sumptuary law in England, — and although their stout travelling-dresses, drab cloaks, thick boots, the shaggy shawls severally carried by each on one arm, the faded blue cravats tied round their throats, were so precisely alike and had been subjected to so exactly the same amount of wear that you could have sworn each article was its fellow, you know you did detect a trifling difference in the feathers of their hats, sufficient to prove afterwards a distinguishing badge.

Here Reflection steps in and suggests whether this exact uniformity of dress among British children of one family may not be the outward sign of that harmony and subjection to rule which, so far as I have had an opportunity of judging, prevail in English households. Where could you find such a degree of conformity among American girls as to induce unqualified submission to one standard of taste, and that the maternal? I am not sure that it is desirable to quench all individuality, even in a matter so comparatively insignificant as that of dress. But who can prize too highly the reverence for authority, the sweet feminine modesty, the domestic harmony, which are expressed in this sisterly uniformity of costume? All this might have been spurious in the case just cited, and this harmonious effect arrived at only after an infinite amount of petty squabbling and rebellion; but such unworthy skepticism is rebuked by my faithful Memory, who reminds me of the filial respect combined with girlish gayety and absence of all self-consciousness which forbade the idea for a moment that these young lives were regulated by harsh or compulsory discipline. Still it was discipline, there could be no doubt of that, and of the most healthy order, which gave such a charm to Sir Thomas's daughters. Perhaps they had reaped in their family

circle all and more than all the benefits which school-training and contact with numbers are capable of affording, without the loss of home-influences; for I overheard their mother (rather a loud-voiced woman, by the way) telling somebody, — the clergyman's wife, I suspect, — that she had already married off two similar trios of daughters, and that these were the younger children. Blessings on the children who belong to so well filled a quiver, if they all attain to such a degree of sweetness and decorum as to impress the most casual observer, and one of their own sex, too, with such lasting recollections of their maiden loveliness! I saw them under various circumstances, both flattering and the reverse: saw them, when, with their own servants in attendance, and the advantages of social position, they might not unnaturally have laid claim to precedence; saw them and their drawing-materials shuffled hastily from the steamer's cabin one rainy day, to make way for the dinner-cloth, in accordance with steamboat regulations, and in spite of their mild expostulations; saw one of them, at least, subjected to the presumptuous advances of a chance admirer: but I never saw any instance in which their behavior was not marked by modesty and good-nature, accompanied by a quiet dignity and self-respect which repelled intrusion so effectually as to justify their experienced mother in giving them the freedom of steamboats, rocks, caves, and crowds, to a degree which is seldom exceeded by the boasted independence of American girls.

But Memory reminds me that I did not see all this during that noontday hour when the Pioneer was bearing down upon Staffa, and that long before these English girls had established themselves so high in my good opinion we had skirted nearly the whole of the eastern shore of the island. The steamer is now gradually slackening her speed, preparatory to coming to a full stop not far from the southeastern extremity, and we realize that the first goal of this day's hopes is gained.

perfidious Mr. Glide, instead of moving his lips affirmatively, simply lifted his Champagne-glass, and in the act raised his forefinger so as to cover the side of his nose. To this individual, no doubt the boon companion of some rascally reporter, we probably owe the circum-

stance that a garbled and incorrect account of this affair appeared in the Baltimore and Washington papers. The present writer has consequently felt it incumbent on him to place on record a version which, whatever may be said of it, cannot be stigmatized as exaggerated.

AROUND MULL.

PART II.

THE island of Staffa being nearly a mile in length, we have already had a distant external view of the huge grassy mound which constitutes its surface, reared on a steep, craggy base, here and there exhibiting superb basaltic columns, and everywhere consisting of basaltic pillars more or less broken, irregular, and contorted, and in some instances forming the entrance to caves of great interest, though of less grandeur and magnificence than the giant temple of Nature which is the principal feature and pride of Staffa and the chief object of our visit. Ah, here comes the Bailie, looking as innocent as possible of the pipe! Christie, too, has crept up from the cabin, and, though professing inability to go ashore, is relieved by the sudden cessation of the steamer's motion, and is prepared to witness with cheerfulness the disembarkation of her more fortunate fellow-passengers. It is the office of boatmen from the neighboring island of Ulva, hardy and skilful men, accustomed to these boisterous seas, to row passengers ashore, and in case of calm weather, such as we are blest with, to conduct their boats within the noble archway and up the grand broad aisle of Fingal's Cave: for the floor of this glorious cathedral is the rolling sea, whose green waves surge with a grand swell and fall to the very extremity of the cave, echoing through its vault with a resonance which gave it its early Gaëlic name of Uaimh Bhinn, the Musical

Cave. How and when these boatmen approached unseen and surrounded our steamer as she lies here in the sun, I cannot imagine; so perfect are all the arrangements for our convenience, that they have probably been lying in wait for our approach, and had only to dash out from among the black rocks of the shore; but in view of the power of Nature in this locality, the wonderful architecture, of which we witness as yet the mere *débris*, and the noble palace of the sea which our imagination is already shadowing forth, it is not difficult to believe that these hardy mariners spring up from the depths at the voyager's bidding, and that they are neither more nor less than ocean genii, the servants of some ocean king, appointed to wait on and convoy his guests. The dexterity of these men and the strength of their boats inspire perfect confidence, however; for the latter are fast filling and putting off for the shore. The landing-place must be near at hand, though as yet out of sight; for "See!" I exclaim to the Bailie, "one or two of the boats have landed their parties and are already returning! Everybody is disappearing from the steamer; had we not better make haste and secure a passage?"

But the Bailie, who is something of a philosopher, has confidence that there is time and accommodation enough for us all; so he and I proceed very leisurely to the step-ladder, and, as everybody else is in a hurry, we fall to the very

last boat that leaves the steamer. A few unforeseen claimants and stragglers present themselves just as we are putting off, and, as often happens at the last chance to go ashore, our boat is somewhat overloaded, and I find myself separated from my companion, who is standing upright in the bows, while I am seated in the stern among the elderly Scotch folk, who seem so familiar with all the detail of the place and the proceedings that I am led to believe them faithful worshippers of Nature who come periodically to pay their vows in the national minster, as members of some parish church go up reverently to the cathedral convocations. An eager, excitable gude-wife next to me is especially anxious and officious, and seems disposed to question the efficiency and prudence of our Ulva boatmen.

"The boat is too full!" she cries, with the emphasis of certainty. "Tell them to put back; she is too full!" and the murmur of alarm echoes in our vicinity. "Don't be afraid, my dear," she adds, in a sort of stage-aside to me, who, though I have observed that the boat's edge is almost on a level with the water, have never dreamed of danger until she put it into my head. "Not a bit of danger," she continues, patting me encouragingly on the shoulder, while in the same breath she reiterates to those in authority her startling warning and her assurance that we shall presently sink by our own weight.

But the Bailie, standing in the bow, still maintains his philosophy, and the smile on his face reassures me. And now, with only just that sense of insecurity which adds to the awe of the occasion, I perceive that we are rounding a cliff, and that the entrance to Fingal's Cave is dawning on our view.

The magnificent proportions and perfect symmetry of the archway which forms the entrance to the cave will be seen to better advantage somewhat later, when the steamer, on leaving the island, sweeps directly past the vestibule purposely to afford her passengers this opportunity; but one is never more impressed with the hugeness and stability

of this gigantic structure than when measuring it by gradual approach, and looking up into its lofty Gothic vault as we glide under the enormous archway and out of the dazzling sunshine into the twilight of the deep interior. Those whose imaginations are aided by statistics may form a more real conception of this great natural structure by reflecting that the archway at the entrance is forty-two feet in width, and its height nearly seventy above the level of the sea, and that these vast proportions are preserved to the farther extremity of the cave, a distance of some two hundred and thirty feet. The imposing effect of the portico is still further enhanced by the massive entablature of thirty feet additional which it supports, and by the noble cluster of pillars grouped on each side of the entrance-way. These lofty pillars, or complication of basaltic columns, are in a general sense perpendicular, their departure from the stern lines and angles of human architecture serving only to proclaim them the workmanship of that Architect who alone is independent of artistic rules, and giving new force to what Goethe tells us is understood by genius, namely, "that Art is called Art because it is *not* Nature." Here, with the poet of Nature, we may offer

"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 overrule
Infinite Power."

And here, if anywhere, is the place to learn how vainly Art may seek to rival Nature. "How splendid," exclaims a learned prelate, "do the porticos of the ancients appear in our eyes from the ostentatious magnificence of the descriptions we have received of them! and with what admiration are we seized, on seeing the colonnades of our modern edifices! But when we behold the Cave of Fingal, formed by Nature in the Isle of Staffa, it is no longer possible to make a comparison; and we are forced to acknowledge that this piece of Nature's architecture far surpasses that of the Louvre, that of St. Peter's at

Rome, all that remains of Palmyra and Pæstum, and all that the genius, taste, and luxury of the Greeks were ever capable of inventing."

So much for a comparison of this ocean cathedral with buildings of human construction; and no less decisive is the verdict of the French author, M. de St. Fond, in contrasting Staffa with other natural edifices. "I have," he says, "seen many ancient volcanoes, and I have given descriptions of several basaltic causeways and delightful caverns in the midst of lavas; but I have never found anything which comes near to this, or can bear any comparison with it, for the admirable regularity of its columns, the height of the arch, the situation, the form, the elegance of this production of Nature or its resemblance to the masterpieces of Art, though Art has had no share in its construction. It is therefore not at all surprising that tradition should have made it the abode of a hero."

These are but general descriptions of this *chef d'œuvre*. Shall I attempt in my own words, or those of any other, to give even a feeble impression of the grandeur which overarches and surrounds us as our boat glides into the interior? Let Wilson speak; I dare not. Listen to his words while I vouch for their truth.

"How often have we since recalled to mind the regularity, magnitude, and loftiness of those columns, the fine overhanging 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 colored 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."

Up this irregular gallery, which extends to the farther extremity of the cave, most of our steamer's party have already gone, having successively deserted the boats to take advantage of this natural pathway, whereby, stepping carefully along the wet slippery floor, and clinging for security to a rope attached to iron bolts riveted in the solid stone of the wall, they can penetrate to the innermost depths of the cavern. Through the dim religious light of the place we can discern their figures, diminished in the distant perspective, as in long procession they grope their way, the joyous laughter of the younger votaries mingling with the little shrieks of alarm or warning with which the more cautious or timid emphasize every misstep or uncertain footing, — the entire human murmur, fortunately for us, softened by distance, or returned to our ears only in the mellowed form of an echo, so that we are spared in some degree that mockery of mirth and discord, otherwise so inevitable, and always so uncongenial to the spirit of the place, — that tumult of voices, exclamations, and shouts so familiar to the tourist, and which drew from Wordsworth, on occasion of his visit to the spot, the half-bitter reflection, —

"We saw, but surely, in the motley crowd,
Not one of us has felt the far-famed sight:
How could we feel it, each the other's blight,
Hurried and hurrying, volatile and loud?"

Thus the Bailie's philosophy has not proved in fault. There is an advantage in being the last comers, if it is merely

that our fellow-tourists have taken themselves out of our way. Only the harsh vituperations of our boatmen make dissonance with Nature, as, their long poles driven hard now against one side and now the other of the cave, they strive to keep the boat in middle position, and save a collision with the rocks. And even this discord is soon overborne. "Sing!" cried the gude-wife at my elbow, as we passed under the great archway, and her plastic soul, alive as readily to the spirit of praise as to that of fear, caught the inspiration of the place; "all of you, sing!"

There was an earnestness, a fervor, in this woman, which made her every word and thought contagious; and as either she, or some neighbor of hers who shared her emotion and purpose, struck the key-note, voice after voice joined in, until there swelled up from our little boat the almost universal song, — no common trivial melody, — not even a national air, — such would have been sacrilege, — but a grand old song of praise, one of those literal versions of the Psalmist familiar to the ear and lip of every kirk-loving Scot. And so, as the singing chorus went sailing up that broad aisle, heart and voice united in a spontaneous liturgy, an act of devout adoration, which seemed the only fit response to the spirit that whispered to our souls, "Praise ye the Lord!"

The psalm ended, our boat with most of its passengers retraces its course and is rowed back to the steamer, — the Bailie and I, however, having first disembarked and clambered up to the rough gallery, with a view of imitating the parties who are pursuing their explorations on foot. This gallery, or causeway, which runs along the eastern side of the cave, is about two feet in width, and consists of the bases of broken pillars, whose dark purple hexagons, cemented together by crystallizations or a white calcareous deposit, form a rough mosaic flooring. The inequality of its surface, and the fact that the stones are worn smooth and slippery by the action of the sea, render it a very precarious pathway; and as soon as we have proceeded

far enough to gratify our curiosity and obtain satisfactory points of view, we are content to abandon the enterprise of penetrating to the remotest depths, preferring to reserve our time for a ramble over the exterior surface of the island.

Emerging from the cavern and skirting its eastern side, we still find ourselves stepping from hexagon to hexagon over a massive bed of refuse material, and gazing upward at the columnar wall on our left which upholds the tableland of the island. No traveller, however ignorant or inappreciative of science, can fail to realize the immense interest which these evidences of some great natural convulsion must possess for the geologist; and a knowledge of the recent geological discoveries in this and other of the Western Islands is not needed to impress us with the conviction that treasures of truth are beneath and around us everywhere, waiting to be revealed. But we have not the key, nor can we pause to pick the lock.

Passing on, then, in our ignorance, but not without an awe of things unknown, we recognize as within the scope of our comprehension two broken pillars so lodged as to constitute the seat and back of a rude chair, which has received the name of Fingal's Chair, and beyond this the Clamshell Cave, so called from the curved form of the mass of basaltic pillars at its entrance; and at length we attain a point where, by scaling a rough staircase constructed for the convenience of tourists, we gain the grassy summit of the island. So perpendicular is the cliff at every point, that, these green slopes once reached, the previous singularity of formation and wildness of scenery at once give place to the pastoral. Rocks, columns, caves, and cliffs are all hid from our view; we have gained Nature's upper story, and around us is a perfect calm. Not even the steamer which brought us hither is visible, so effectually do the bold precipices conceal every near thing in their shadow. The great cavern through which ocean surges with a ceaseless swell lies far beneath us, and no echo of its roar

reaches this spot. A few sheep are nibbling the short grass; the golden star-flowers and the pink heather plumes at our feet are the lineal descendants, for aught we can conceive, of star-flowers and heather plumes that flourished here a thousand years ago,—so undisturbed a possession has Nature had in this realm of hers for ages. No change, improvement, growth, has added to or taken from Staffa. Storm-washed in winter, flower-crowned in summer, its history is forever the same. Sitting here among the heather tufts, and looking off on the limitless blue sea and the neighboring islands, it is not hard to dream one's self away into by-gone centuries, to imagine Bruce and his faithful islesmen sailing past as they go forth to rouse the clans, or, diving deeper into legendary days, to picture Fingal himself and his warlike allies bending their white sails towards the ocean-palace that still claims him as its traditional king.

"O Ossian, Carril, and Ullin! you know of heroes that are no more. Give us the song of other years. Raise, ye bards of other times, raise high the praise of heroes; that my soul may settle on their fame."

"Soon shall my voice be heard no more, and my footsteps cease to be seen," was the prophetic cry of the "first of a thousand heroes," as he learned from "Ullin, the bard of song" that his young son Ryno was "with the awful forms of his fathers." But "the bards will tell of Fingal's name, the stones will talk of me," was the consolatory thought of him, who, grown old in fame, had a foreshadowing of the glory which would hang round his memory, when he exclaimed, "But before I go hence, one beam of fame shall rise. I will remain renowned; the departure of my soul shall be a stream of light."

And who among ancient heroes could better deserve to have his memory embalmed than he whom an honorable foe thus eulogized?—"Blest be thy soul, thou king of shells! In peace thou art the gale of spring; in war, the mountain storm." And what touching

interest to us of later times hangs round this legendary champion of the right, when we listen to his mingled strain of triumph, lament, and justification!—"When will Fingal cease to fight? I was born in the midst of battles, and my steps must move in blood to the tomb. But my hand did not injure the weak, my steel did not touch the feeble in arms. I behold thy tempests, O Morven! which will overturn my halls, when my children are dead in battle, and none remains to dwell in Selma. Then will the feeble come, but they will not know my tomb. My renown is only in song. My deeds shall be as a dream to future times!"

Yes, a dream,—and we are the dreamers. The songs of the bards are ringing in our ears, and though no stone marks the tomb of Fingal, the stones talk of him; the great basaltic columns are his memorial pillars, and the sea yet sounds his dirge as its wailing echo sweeps mournfully through Fingal's Cave.

But hark! The bell of the Pioneer is rousing us with the cry, "Wake up, ye dreamers! Come back from the clouds, ye visionaries!" The time for Staffa is up, and the steamer, like a cackling hen who is eager to call her brood together, commences a system of coaxing, warning, and threat, which soon results in the converging of her passengers from every quarter of the island. Most of them are by this time rambling over its upper surface, and all make for the rough stairway where the comparative difficulties of the "ascensus" and "descensus" are in complete contradiction to classical authority: the former having been accomplished with ease, while the latter proves a terrific experience. There is truly something maternal about the Pioneer; for here, as at every other point of difficulty on our excursion, faithful guides are stationed and strong hands outstretched for our assistance. Still it is with a plunge,—half a nightmare and half a miracle,—that we, who are among the earliest to make the experiment, arrive safely at the bottom, and, stepping on board

a boat, regain the steamer, where we sit at our leisure and laugh at the absurd figure made by later comers as they scramble down the cliff: Sir Thomas even forgetting his dignity in the difficulties of the operation, and the interjectional phrases of her Ladyship, as she now and then comes to a hopeless stand-still, tickling our ears at the distance where we sit watching them.

Our entire party fairly on board, the Pioneer, now panting to be off, sets her wheels in motion and starts on her further course, not, however, without first skirting the base of the island and affording us, as I have already intimated, one last view of Fingal's Cave, and that the finest. It is an impressive circumstance, that at this moment the attention of the tourist on the steamer's deck is divided between Nature's great cathedral and man's early efforts in the same direction, — that immediately opposite the pillared vestibule of the Staffa *minster the Abbey tower of the Blessed Isle looms boldly on our view, the mimic architecture of man paying silent homage to the spot,

"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,
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!'"

And so, with a great lesson behind us and before, we sail away on that summer sea and bid farewell to Staffa. The timid seal whom we have disturbed creeps back to her cell, the wild-fowl returns to its nest, the sea-swell rolls in and out in waves unbroken by our keel, and the warm sun holds all in his soft embrace. The winter winds will roar through the cavern ere long, the ocean lash pillar and ceiling with its foam, tempests will beat and rage against its giant col-

umns, the stormy petrel will flap its wings in the archway, and the piercing cry of the sea-gull keep time to the diapason of the deep; but the massive structure whose corner-stone is hid beneath the waters, and which leans upon the Rock of Ages, will still defy the tempest and loom in lonely grandeur, alike in summer's smile and winter's frown the dwelling-place of the Almighty. Iona's walls, reared centuries ago, and dedicated to Him by human tribute, have crumbled or are fast crumbling to decay; but this mighty temple, whose foundations no man laid, has gazed calmly through all these ages at man's feeble work, and will gaze unchanged until He who holds the sea in the hollow of His hand shall uproot its columns.

III.

Now on to Iona, a distance of seven or eight miles, a formidable voyage, perhaps, for early pilgrims to this sacred shrine, to us barely affording time for dinner, a meal of which I have no remembrance of partaking on this eventful day, — though my recollections would doubtless have been more poignant, if I had failed to do so, — and of which I can at least certify that it was sumptuous and well-served, since the luxurious habits of life enjoyed on these floating hotels of the Hutchesons are proverbial, and the flavor of good cheer still clings to my palate, especially that of the daily "salmon so fresh as still to retain its creamy curd."

The approach to Iona, Icolmkill, or Colmeskill, as it is variously termed, has in it nothing imposing, if we except the ancient Abbey, already descried at a distance, and the neighboring ruins, the simple fact of whose presence in this lonely isle is suggestive of all that has given interest and sanctity to this cradle of Christianity in Britain. On landing at the rude pier, formed of masses of gneiss and granite boulders, we find ourselves opposite the modern village, a row of some forty cottages, running parallel with the shore,

and, as is the case in nearly all Scotch villages, including both an established and a free church. We have scarcely set foot on the beach before we have a verification of Wordsworth's experience : —

"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."

But I have no heart to find fault with this small fry of the modern fishing-town, whose trade in pressed sea-weeds, shells, and stones is now so extensive that near the ruins they have established rival counters, and are a most clamorous set of persecutors ; for I still have pleasure in looking on the really precious and suggestive mementos of the place which they thrust upon me, a willing victim.

A little to the rear of the village, though still nearly on a level with the beach, are the ruins, to which we are guided by Archibald Macdonald, chief boatman, and authorized to act as our cicerone. In setting forth on our explorations, we must premise that little now remains to mark the age of the Culdees and the simple life of St. Columba and those companions of his apostolic zeal who first settled in Iona, and thence, going forth in pilgrim fashion and with the endurance of pilgrim hardships, diffused Christianity through Britain. A huge mound, or cairn, yet marks the place where the missionaries first landed ; and there are still, in a remote part of the island, vestiges of the rude dwelling-place or cell in which the Culdees first made their abode and set up the cross as a luminary for the yet uncivilized nations. With the exception of these rude vestiges, the tradition of their virtues and the results of their self-sacrificing labors are their only memorial. But the standard which they planted followers of later ages have continued to maintain ; and the monastic buildings, now more or less ruinous, and marking successive eras of Church history, are all of great antiquity, many being of a date so remote that the rec-

ords of them are merely traditional. But wherever the pilgrim turns his eye or sets his foot, voices whisper to him that this is holy ground. The very silence and mystery which inwrap the place have a tendency to exalt the soul ; and although doubts may arise in regard to some of the traditions, and incredulity may condemn others as simply mythical, faith so often becomes sight, and the essence of faith is so triumphant everywhere, as to make us feel, with the great moralist, that "that man is little to be envied whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona.

Our first visit is to the Nunnery, of which the chapel only remains standing. The style of its architecture is Norman, and it probably dates no farther back than the beginning of the thirteenth century. The tomb of the Princess Anna, the last prioress, is still preserved, though much defaced by the rude feet of soulless tourists. Her figure is sculptured in bas-relief on the stone, and the mirror and comb which are introduced as symbolic of the female sex suggest that instinct of decoration inherent in woman, and which, if superfluous anywhere, certainly would be so in a nunnery at Iona. There is a sad interest in the remains of this sanctuary, the only refuge for innocence and gentleness in a barbarous age, when many a votary was doubtless driven hither by motives similar to those which actuated the fair maid of Lorn, of whom Sir Walter Scott tells us, —

"The maid has given her maiden heart
To Ronald of the Isles ;
And, fearful lest her brother's word
Bestow her on that English lord,
She seeks Iona's piles ;
And wisely deems it best to dwell
A votress in the holy cell,
Until these feuds, so fierce and fell,
The abbot reconciles."

"The cemetery of the nunnery," as we learn on the authority of Dr. Johnson, and at the date of his visit, "was, till very lately, regarded with such reverence that only women were buried in it." And how the burly speech and rug-

ged bluntness characteristic of the old philosopher are softened and atoned for, to my thinking, when he adds, "These relics of veneration always produce some mournful pleasure. I could have forgiven a great injury more easily than the violation of this imaginary sanctity."

Next to its renown as an ancient seat of piety and learning, it is as a burial-place that Iona is chiefly known and venerated. Though it is difficult now to identify the tombs of kings, or to distinguish them from those of the humbler individuals who have found a last resting-place in Reilig Orain, the burial-place of St. Oran, it is unquestionably true that the sanctity of the island gave it a preference over any other spot as a place of sepulture, especially for royalty, — a preference, doubtless, partly due to the belief in an ancient Gaelic prophecy, which foretold that before the end of the world "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, among whom we have Shakspeare's authority for including King Duncan.

Rasse. Where is Duncan's body?

Macd. Carried to Colmeskill,

The sacred storehouse of his predecessors,
And guardian of their bones."

Among the monuments of Christianity in Iona, none are more conspicuous and eloquent than the numerous crosses, of which the original number is said to have been three hundred and sixty. Most of them have been ruthlessly carried away or demolished. For myself, much as I deplore the Vandalism which has mutilated nearly all these sacred memorials, I can well dispense with the other three hundred and fifty-nine crosses for the sake of the vivid recollection, I may almost say consciousness, I have of one, that of St. Martin, which stands upright and in good preservation just at the entrance of the cathedral inclosure, and produces a solemn effect upon the mind of every reverential beholder. It consists of a solid column of mica schist, fourteen feet in height, fixed in a mas-

sive pedestal of red granite, and is of substantial rather than graceful proportions. It is carved in high relief, and on one side is sculptured with emblematic devices, of which the Virgin and Child, surrounded by cherubs, occupy the central place. But its most characteristic feature is its antiquity, enhanced to the eye by the gray lichens and the rust of time, with which it is so incrustated that it presents a hoary and venerable aspect, and seems the embodiment of that ancient faith to which the whole island is consecrated. Here saints and abbots of distant ages have knelt and wept and prayed, and caught the inspiration for their labor of love; and here still, if we listen to the voices in our hearts, we may hear the Spirit's whisper, and he who runs may read the ever-living sermon written on the old gray stone.

We have now gained the Cathedral, by far the best preserved and most imposing of the ruined edifices of Iona, — a building which exhibits various styles of architecture, and which is probably of more recent construction than the other monastic or ecclesiastical monuments. It is cruciform, and the square tower at the intersection, about seventy feet in height, remains entire. The building is unroofed: for here, as in the case of every other ancient structure on the island, every particle of wood-work has been carried away, that material being too precious in Iona to escape being converted to utilitarian purposes. The dimensions of the cathedral or abbey church are spacious, and it boasted, even in recent centuries, a noble altar and many other decorations, of which it has been despoiled, — partly, no doubt, by the inhabitants of the island; but tourists and pilgrims to the place are in no slight degree responsible for these depredations, since, in their eagerness for mementos, they have mercilessly robbed and mutilated it, and it is prophesied, that, in spite of every possible precaution, many of the interesting memorials of antiquity in Iona will soon be unrecognizable or will have ceased to exist.

The tomb of Abbot Mackinnon, who died in 1500, though greatly defaced, still exhibits a sculptured figure of its occupant, thought to do much credit to the art of that period; and the largest monument in the island, that of Macleod of Macleod, is still preserved. It is in this church that the celebrated "Black Stones" of Iona were kept, on which the old Highland chieftains were accustomed to take oaths of contract or allegiance, and for which they entertained so sincere a reverence that oaths thus ratified were never broken. Dr. Johnson observes, — "In those days of violence and rapine, it was of great importance to impress upon savage minds the sanctity of an oath, by some particular and extraordinary circumstances. They would not have recourse to the black stones upon small or common occasions; and when they had established their faith by this tremendous sanction, inconstancy and treachery were no longer feared."

Though neither the ancient structures nor the modern village of Iona are situated much above the sea-level, and are so near to the shore as to constitute the foreground of the picture, as seen from the usual landing-place, the island is not without its highlands, which rise to a considerable elevation immediately behind the village, some bold cliffs even obtruding themselves upon our return pathway to the steamer: for I can recall the picturesque effect produced upon the landscape by the figure of one of the Baronet's daughters, seated at her ease upon the summit of a huge, precipitous rock, her sketch-book in her lap, and her pencil busily delineating the prospect in our direction. I scarcely think, however, that, like the travelling photographer, she dreamed of including her fellow-tourists in her sketch-book of reminiscences, any more than I then anticipated the day when I should be tempted to illustrate mine by her own and her sister's portraits.

I believe some rare ferns are to be found in Iona; it includes in its vegetable kingdom one hawthorn, and a species of dwarf-oak is said to occur

there sparingly; but I cannot remember seeing even the most inferior specimen of a tree upon the island. Bareness, desolation, is its one characteristic, — a feature from which the meanness and poverty of the row of village huts by no means detracts. As, once more re-embarked on our steamer, we take a final view of Iona, the external impression is meagre and poor indeed. So much the warmer and more animated, then, is the glow of enthusiasm and gratitude with which we dwell on the piety and self-sacrifice of those saints of old with whose memory the Blessed Isle is still fragrant. Nor are the piety and zeal of God's saints perpetuated chiefly by ecclesiastical monuments, or embalmed in human hearts alone; for,

"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 amarantine bloom,
While heaven's vast sea of voices chants their praise."

Is it the weariness of body entailed on us by our pilgrimages among the wonders of Staffa and the ruins of Iona, — is it the mind overtaken by the effort to grasp and comprehend so much of interest and novelty, — or is it the soul tuned to deeper thoughts and holier sympathies than are wont to engage it, which steeps us for the remainder of our voyage in the luxury of repose? A mingling of all, I suspect. And happily the sentiment seems universal. Christie, who, warned by her painful experience of the steamer's oscillations, as she swung like a pendulum on the sea-swell off Staffa, has been only too glad to accompany us on shore at Iona, is not only relieved of her sea-sickness, but insured for the rest of the trip. Somehow she, the Bailie, and I find ourselves among that large proportion of our company who have gradually migrated to the forward part of the boat, where, forgetful of the conventionalities which have hitherto restrained us, we are grouped on the fore-deck in whatever listless or indolent attitude the prevailing mood may suggest. The August afternoon is drawing to a close, and the sun is declining. Our share in the

day's labor — though it be but laborious pleasure — is done; the remainder of the task devolves on the Pioneer, and, while she ploughs the waves, we have but to rest, meditate, and congratulate ourselves and one another. There is a hum of merry voices from the knot of gay young Scots, whose spirits are toned down, not damped, by the experiences of the day. Our English girls, with their young brother, are prettily grouped on the deck-floor, the latter stretched at the feet of the youngest girl, and exchanging with her those sweet confidences which always exist between a chivalrous boy and the sister nearest his own age. Their confiding parents have remained aft, as have a majority of the elders of the company; but, though youth, freedom, and high natural spirits preponderate at our end of the boat, peace seems to be brooding over us with dove-like wings.

We are still skirting the bold, precipitous shores of Mull, the central loadstone which has kept us all day to our course, and now and then our attention is especially engrossed by the view of her rugged cliffs, terrible in winter's storms, and her natural arches of basalt, through which the sea washes at high-water, and which betray in every feature a family likeness to great Staffa. But for the most part our hearts and thoughts now are with the past, and gratitude and thanksgiving are welling up within us for a day on which sunshine, fair breezes, and a prosperous voyage have combined with Nature's most glorious revelations and humanity's holiest relics in opening up to us pleasures and privileges beyond compare. Or, if a thought of the future mingles with our medita-

tions, it is the rapturous thought that these gifts of Providence once ours are ours for a life-time.

At length, a softening of the majestic landscape, a contraction from the sea's wide expanse into comparatively still waters, and, bidding farewell to Mull, we have entered the Sound of Kerrera, and the great island is hid from us by its less imposing sister, Kerrera Island, the same that land-locks the Bay of Oban. We have but to make our way through the picturesque channel, whose scenery is already familiar to our eyes, and now Dunolly, the moss-crowned warder of the bay, greets us once more, her friendly face, as we sweep into our little harbor, seeming to hail us with a "Welcome Home!"

Home to the Caledonian, where a "towsy tea," as my Scotch friends would term it, awaits the tired and hungry travellers: a motley, substantial meal: fowls of the daintiest, — fresh herring, never eaten in such perfection as on the Hebridean coast, — honey-comb of the tint of burnt umber, — fragrant, ambrosial honey, the very juice of the heather, the crystallized sun and dew in which these unshadowed hills bask and bathe without let or hindrance.

Then a stroll round the bay and along the white sea-wall, now glistening in the moonlight, and then to bed, to dream perhaps of Ossian's heroes, of storm-swept castles, of old monkish rites, and of the ocean cathedral's eternal chant, — dreams which, however varied and strange, can lull the spirit into no softer illusions, can rouse it to no wilder ecstasies than the reality of our experience in our twelve hours' sail round Mull.