

April Anniversary.



THE BATTLE OF CULLODEN.

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"Drumossie Muir, Drum o' the day,
A wae'ful day it was to me;
For there I lost my father dear,
My father dear and brethren three."

Thus celebrated battle was fought on the estate of Culloden, Inverness, on April 16, 1746, and which is memorable as having put an end to the Rebellion. On the night preceding, the Highlanders had intended to surprise the Duke of Cumberland, in his camp, at Nairn; but this scheme having failed, they took up a position on the Moor of Drumossie, their left wing towards the house of Culloden, where the declivity of the hill was soft and marshy, their right slightly protected by a stone wall. The ground was unfavourable, and the Highlanders were weakened by hunger and fatigue, so that it had been judged expedient to withdraw to the hills; but the difficulty of finding subsistence for the men, and the importance of protecting Inverness, determined the Prince Charles Edward and his councillors to venture a battle. Drawn up in a line in the position above mentioned while waiting for the signal to charge, the Highlanders suffered greatly from the English artillery. Exasperated, at last, beyond endurance, the centre rushed forward; and the last charge of the Highlanders, under their patriarchal discipline, and with their peculiar arms, is thus vividly described in Chambers's "History of the Rebellion":—

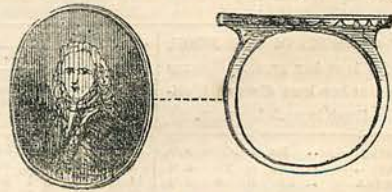
"A lowland gentleman, who was in the line, and who survived till a late period, used always, in relating the events of Culloden, to comment with a feeling of something like awe upon the terrific and more than natural expression of rage which glowed in every face and gleamed in every eye, as he surveyed the extended line at this moment. Notwithstanding that the three files of the front line of English poured forth their incessant fire of musketry; notwithstanding that the cannon, now loaded with grape-shot, swept the field as with a hail-storm; notwithstanding the flank fire of Wolf's regiment, onward went the headlong Highlanders, flinging themselves into, rather than rushing upon, the lines of the enemy, which, indeed, they did not see for the smoke till involved among their weapons. It was a moment of dreadful, agonising suspense, but only a moment, for the whirlwind does not sweep the forest with greater rapidity than the Highlanders cleared the line. They swept through and over that frail barrier almost as easily and instantaneously as the bounding cavalcade brushes through the morning labours of the gossamer which stretch across its

path; not, however, with the same unconscionness of the events! Almost every man in their front rank, chief and gentleman, fell before the deadly weapons which they had braved; and although the enemy gave way, it was not till every bayonet was bent and bloody with the strife.

"When the first line had been completely swept aside, the assailants continued their impetuous advance till they came near to the second, when, being almost annihilated by a profuse and well directed fire, the shattered remains of what had been, but an hour before, a numerous and confident force, at last submitted to destiny by giving way and flying. Still, a few rushed on, resolved rather to die than thus forfeit their well-acquired and dearly-estimated honour. They rushed on, but not a man ever came in contact with the enemy. The last survivor perished as he reached the points of the bayonets."

It is said, that in one place, where a vigorous attack had been made, their bodies were afterwards found in layers three or four deep.

The right wing of the Highlanders, advancing at the same time, was attacked in flank by the English cavalry and broken; the left withdrew almost without sharing in the fight. About 600 men were killed on each side. The battle, however, was decisive; the Prince fled to the mountains, and some days after, gave



SIGNET-RING OF THE PRETENDER.

notice to his partisans to provide for their own safety, declining to continue the contest with 8000 men, who were ready to meet him in Badenoch. This memorable event has given rise to many plaintive popular songs: a verse from one of which, pathetically lamenting the horrors of war, is quoted above.