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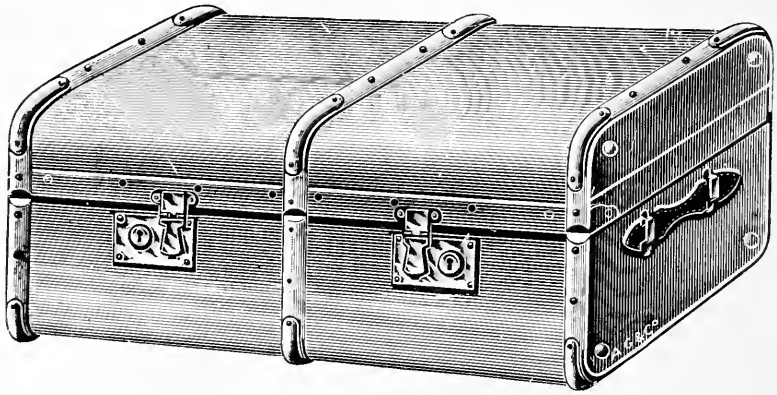

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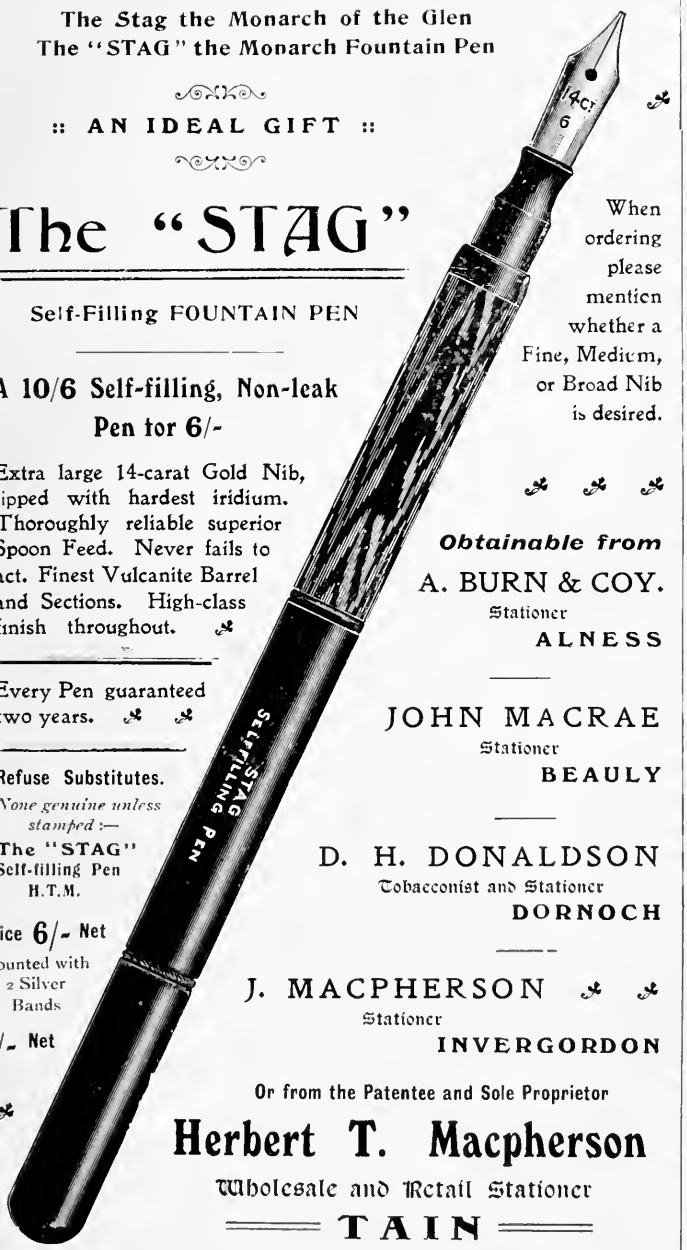

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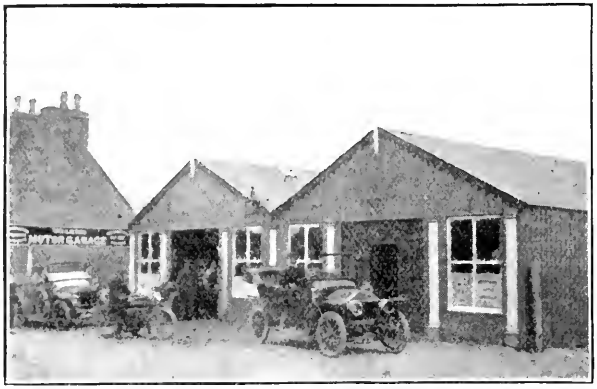

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TAIN FROM THE SEA.

EASTER ROSS

BY

ALEXANDER POLSON, J.P., F.E.I.S.

TAIN:
H. T. MACPHERSON
1914.

CONTENTS.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

EASTER ROSS.

ROSS-SHIRE is a County Palatine of Scotland and Easter Ross is the garden of Ross-shire. The district extends from the burn of Alness (the river Averon) on the south to the Dornoch Firth and the Kyle of Sutherland on the north. On the east it is bounded by the Moray, the Cromarty, and the Dornoch, Firths, while on the west it is in touch on high lands with the parish of Lochbroom, and that of Assynt in Sutherland. It has an area of 283,316 acres and in this area are embraced the nine parishes of Rosskeen, Kilmuir, Logie Easter, Nigg, Fearn, Tarbat, Tain, Edderton, and Kincardine, the Royal Burgh of Tain, the Police Burgh of Invergordon, as well as the villages of Bridgend of Alness, Saltburn, Balnabruach (Nigg), Shandwick, Balintore, Fearn, Portmahomack, Inver, Edderton, and Ardgay.

The Highland Railway enters the district at Alness where there is a remarkably handsome skew bridge of two arches ; and there are stations at Alness, Invergordon, Delny, Kildary, Nigg, Fearn, Tain, Edderton, Bonar Bridge, and Culrain near which the railway is carried across the Oykel into Sutherlandshire by a latticed iron girder viaduct of 230 feet span, 55 feet above ordinary spring tides It traverses in all over thirty-two miles of the district. Though at Alness the railway is only 75 feet above sea level, at Invergordon 23 feet, at Tain 15 feet, and at Bonar Bridge 20 feet, yet the views got on right and left from a railway carriage are marvellously beautiful.

THE ATTRACTIONS OF EASTER ROSS.

For people who believe that a holiday is best spent in some favourite out-door pursuit and thus rest and renew vital energies, few districts in Scotland afford such a great variety of attractions as Easter Ross. There are three ideal seaside golf courses. There are miles upon miles of beautiful sandy beaches from which bathers can safely get into clear salt water, and on which children can play in clean sand or wade in clear water by the hour. For the geologist who can follow in the steps of Hugh Miller, the whole district is full of special interest. Those who delight in shells, land or marine, or the natural history of the sea shore, will find much to interest them. For the artist there are many combinations of mountains and moors beautiful from many standpoints, wide stretches of landscape and seascape ; and as light, shade, and colour vary all day long, there is a never-ending variety of subjects for the brush or pencil. The sociologist and the antiquary will find the place brimful of interest, while those who delight in boating and sailing can do so safely. Everywhere around there is a contented and prosperous population possessed of that kindness and courtesy natural to Highlanders. The

cost of living is certainly much more moderate than in many districts which offer fewer attractions.

Tain, the centre of the district, is by rail within eight hours of Edinburgh and Glasgow, and within sixteen hours of London. Mails are received and despatched thrice daily and the trunk telephone system has been extended to Tain.

There are many points from which the widest of views of scenic beauty can easily be obtained. Thus if a person stands at Invergordon Harbour he can on a clear day see across the Moray Firth, and, skirting the horizon, the distinctly defined coast of Moray; nearer, the Sutors of Cromarty forming the gateway through which the waters enter, and which immediately within expand into a broad and beautiful bay with the old town of Cromarty nestling cosily on the southern side; on the north a rich and fertile country with a magnificent background of hills. Other points commanding even wider sweeps are Nigg Hill, from which one can trace the railway from Elgin to Inverness and then right round to Helmsdale; Tarbatness Lighthouse, the top of Tain Tower, and Struie Hill. Everywhere the scenery has the advantage of showing wide sheets of water which add to the charm, for it still continues to be thought that "scenery without water is like a drawing-room without a mirror."

If a map showing the rainfall in the various parts of the kingdom be consulted it appears that this whole district lies within the driest belt in Scotland, and the rainfall averages less than 24 inches per annum. During the summer months there is much sunshine but the heat is tempered by proximity to the sea. Approximately the average temperature for May is 49°F., June 54°, July 57°, August 56·8°, and September 53°. June is usually an ideal month and the pity is that visitors cannot in larger numbers sojourn here then.

There are in all just about 200 miles of roads beautifully kept, and the surface is all that can be wished for by motorists and cyclists.

HISTORY.

If that district which has little history is to be considered happy then this is one of the happiest of spots, as there are records of wonderfully few of those happenings which are considered history, civil or uncivil, but much could be written of the ebb and flow of the many ecclesiastical or religious waves by which for centuries the district has been swept.

According to Ptolemy, a tribe called the Decanbae lived in the district which extends from Beauly to Edderton, and the Smertae occupied the valleys of the Carron, Oykell, and Shin. At a later period the inhabitants of the district were known as Picts, who probably mixed with Celts. When the Norsemen came to the west coast they probably drove the Scots eastward and thus there is some likelihood that in the dim past there was a time when the inhabitants spoke Pictish, Gaelic, and Norse. Before the opening of the tenth century the Norsemen were all-powerful in the district and held sway for about two hundred years.

When their power waned at the opening of the twelfth century the Gaels were triumphant and the Picts a lost race. Of the feuds for mastery between these races not a trace seems to remain in authentic history or local tradition and really nothing can be affirmed of it until it was formally annexed to the kingdom of Scotland, and then for a long time its history is associated with Tain, its capital, which received from Malcolm Canmore its first charter somewhere about 1060 A.D. There still exists in the Tain Council Chambers a notarial certified copy made in 1564, of the Royal Charter granted in 1457 by James II., who in it confirms the grants made by his predecessors, "To God, the blessed St. Duthus, the church and clergy, the town of Tain and its inhabitants, the immunities granted them within the four corner crosses placed about the bounds of Tain and all their liberties and privileges."

Probably it was by Malcolm that the right of "Sanctuary" was conferred on the town, a right which must have helped the place into prominence all over the north as to it in lawless times the weaker could go and be safe from their oppressors. It is quite possible that this right was got from Malcolm and his proselytising superstitious Queen Margaret by Duthack or Duthus, afterwards St. Duthus, who is said to have been born in the now ruined ivy covered chapel near the railway station and who by that time had somehow acquired his saintly character. The king would very likely hold Duthus in awe and readily grant the request if he were told that a smith, when Duthus as a boy came to him for fire, placed some live coals in his lap and that the lad carried them home without injury to himself or his clothes, and that angels were seen encamping around his home at the Angel's Hill. St. Duthus studied in Ireland, probably travelled as a missionary, and died in Armagh in 1065. To this spot nearly two hundred years afterwards his remains were carried and in this way the holiness of this sanctuary was further enhanced. So sacred was this sanctuary held all over Scotland, that in 1306, when Robert the Bruce's fortunes were at their lowest ebb, he sent his queen and daughter here with several ladies and a number of knights. William, the fourth Earl of Ross, unscrupulously violated the sanctuary, slew the knights, and delivered the ladies up to their English enemies.

Its sanctuary was next violated in 1427 when Mowat, a laird of Freswick in Caithness, was defeated by Thomas Macneil of Creich. The vanquished fled here for refuge, but the angry pursuers slew all whom they found outside and then set fire to the chapel and so brought death to their enemies within and an end to the building, which has never since been roofed. According to some authorities important documents placed here for safety were also burnt, perhaps also St. Duthus' shirt, a relic which was said to possess marvellous powers, but did not preserve Hugh, the fifth Earl of Ross, from fatal wounds though he wore it at the battle of Halidon Hill in 1333. The English, who likely enough regarded the relic with awe, restored it to the sanctuary.

To the chaplain of this shrine, James IV. ordered an annual sum to be paid that masses might be said on behalf of his father's soul, while he himself did penance by wearing an iron chain to which he added a link year by year, and came here on penance intent sometimes thrice a year for nineteen successive years, that is from 1494 to 1513. During these journeys he would doubtless learn to take an interest in the Highlands, would probably hear complaints of injustice and help to maintain justice. He was here for the last time on 5th August 1513, and on 9th September following he fell at Flodden.

In 1483, William, Lord Crichton, took refuge within this "girth" of Tain, and though verbally summoned by the King's macer to come to Edinburgh, he refused to leave it and lived here in safety for some time.

Much of the subsequent history of Tain and Easter Ross is connected with the struggle of the various creeds and churches for mastery, and some of these are detailed in the next chapter, but several other historical incidents are worthy of note. For many a long year the Earls of Ross and other great folk really held kingly sway and were very pleasant masters for their subjects so long as they had their own way, but woe betide any who turned on them. It is told, and though the story may be apocryphal it is illustrative, that when an injured woman complained to an Earl of Ross, then said to be resident at Balnagown, that she would go to the king for redress he ordered horseshoes to be nailed to the soles of her feet that she might be better able to perform the journey.

Among others who for a time had an interest in Easter Ross was "The Wolf of Badenoch," who married a Countess of Ross, and received a Royal charter of his wife's lands.

There are also records of clan battles. There was one fought at Alt Charrais in 1486 or 1487 between John, Earl of Sutherland, and Alexander the Sixth of Balnagown. The occasion was revenge. One Angus Mackay, the son of Neil Vass Mackay, had been previously slain at Tarbat; a son of the slain man begged the Earl of Sutherland for assistance so that he might be revenged for his father's death. The Earl yielded and sent his uncle, Robert Sutherland, with a company of chosen men to assist Mackay. Strathoykell was invaded with fire and sword, and there was "burnt, spoiled, and wasted many lands appertaining to the Rosses. The laird of Balnagown, hearing of this invasion, gathered all the forces of the province of Ross, and met Robert Sutherland and John Mackay at Alt Charrais. There ensued a cruel battle, which continued a long space with incredible obstinacy; the doubt of the victory being no less great than the desire. Much blood was shed. In the end, the inhabitants of Ross, being unable to endure the enemy's force were utterly disbanded and put to flight. Alexander Ross of Balnagown was there slain with seventeen other landed gentlemen of the province of Ross, with a great number of common soldiers."

Some of the leaders of Easter Ross Society, notably Katherine, the eldest daughter of the ninth Earl of Balnagown, had resort to witchcraft

St. Duthus Chapel, Tain.

and poisoning to accomplish her purposes, and her career is fully and interestingly set out in *Chambers' Domestic Annals of Scotland*, vol. 1, pp. 203.

Much interest was excited in this district in 1626 in connection with the thirty years' war, and a regiment was raised here to fight under Gustavus Adolphus. It is worthy of note that in these German wars under this Lion of the North, there were engaged three generals, eight colonels, five lieutenant-colonels, eleven majors, and more than thirty captains, besides a large number of subalterns of the name of Munro.

The Twelfth Ross of Balnagown, at his own expense, raised a regiment of Rosses to help Charles II., and proceeded with the Scots to England, where they were defeated at Worcester. Eight thousand prisoners were taken, and among them many Easter Ross men who were sold as slaves to the American Colonists. The laird himself was imprisoned in the Tower and died in 1653. It is pleasing to have to record that after the Restoration this king settled a pension on Balnagown's son.

That was not the only connection Easter Ross had with the fight between Cromwell and the Royalists, and the following account of how Lieut.-Colonel Strachan outwitted the celebrated Marquis of Montrose on the borders of Sutherland and Ross is of interest.

The Marquis crossed from Orkney to Caithness in April 1650. He had calculated on collecting a considerable force in that county, but failed. He marched southwards, and the Earl of Sutherland retired before him as he advanced and Montrose reached Strath Oykell with but a force of 1200 men. Lieut.-Colonel Strachan hurried to meet him with a party of horse, while Leslie was pressing on with 3000 foot. It was resolved that the Earl should cross into Sutherland to intercept Montrose's retreat, while Strachan advanced with 230 horse and 170 foot in search of him. Under cover of some broom, they succeeded in surprising him at a disadvantage, on level ground near a pass called Invercharron, on the borders of the parish, on Saturday, 27th April 1650, having diverted his attention by the display of merely a small body of horse. Montrose immediately endeavoured to reach a wood and craggy hill at a short distance in his rear with his infantry, but they were overtaken. The Orkney men made but little resistance, and the Germans surrendered, but the few Scottish soldiers fought bravely. Many gallant cavaliers were made prisoners, and when the day was irretrievably lost, the Marquis threw off his cloak bearing the star, and afterwards changed clothes with a Highland kern that he might effect his escape. He swam across the Kyle, directed his flight up Strath Oykell, and lay for three days concealed among the wilds of Assynt. At length, exhausted with fatigue and hunger he was apprehended by Neil Macleod, who happened to be out in search of him. The gallant Marquis' subsequent fate is well known.

As in other parts of the north the people of this district were much agitated by "The Fifteen," though they seem almost unanimously to have sided with the Hanoverians. Sir Robert Munro asked Lord Strathnaver to assist him to defend Ross-shire. This he did, and at the same time the Munroes, Grants, and Rosses were mustered by their chiefs. When the Earl of Seaforth, who favoured the Jacobites, asked Sir Robert to deliver up all his defensive weapons, he refused, garrisoned his house, and sent men to the rendezvous at Alness. But Lord Duffus, with Seaforth not far away, marched into Tain with between 400 and 500 men of the Mackenzies, Chisholms, and Macdonalds, proclaimed James there, and then made haste south to join the Earl of Mar. The Easter Ross men who stood by the Government were in 1716 gathered at Fearn to the number of 700, ready to march to Inverness but they had to complain of the scarcity of provisions. So scarce indeed was meal then in this district, that the people were starving. This regiment was soon afterwards disbanded.

In "The Forty-five" Easter Ross men, with the exception of the Earl of Cromartie and his son, Lord Macleod, again seem to have favoured the government and some of them were at Prestonpans and Falkirk. Tain was during this time subjected to great distress and oppression from a large body of Jacobites quartering there and making arbitrary demands for money, and the magistrates were forced to make large payments. The Earl of Cromartie raised 400 men and with his son (then a lad of eighteen), marched to join the Pretender's army and they fought—possibly against other Ross-shire men at Falkirk. Subsequently the Earl held the chief command north of the Beauly, but was on 15th April 1746, surprised and defeated near Dunrobin Castle where he was captured on the eve of Culloden. For this, both father and son were sentenced to death, but by the strenuous and good offices of Sir John Gordon, the second Baronet of Invergordon, they were afterwards pardoned. This Lord Macleod, after distinguished service in India, succeeded to the estates of his influential uncle in 1783, and had his family estates restored to him in 1894. It was he who sold the Invergordon estates to Macleod of Cadboll.

So far the hisory of Easter Ross, like that of most other parts, has simply been the story of the fighting of chieftains or their superiors for supremacy but the condition of the people, as Hallam says, "like many others relating to the progress of society is a very obscure inquiry. We can trace the pedigrees of princes, fill up the catalogue of towns besieged and provinces desolated, describe the whole pageantry of coronations and festivals, but we cannot recover the genuine history of mankind. It has passed away with slight and partial notice by contemporary writers, and our most patient industry can hardly at present put together enough of the fragments to suggest a tolerably clear representation of ancient manners and social life."

"The Forty-five" altered the relation of the people to their chiefs and the relation was afterwards in many cases a purely commercial one as between landlord and tenant, and of course the former were naturally anxious to get the highest possible rent for their lands. Farming in this fertile *machair* was as yet carried on in primitive fashion but improvements were being inaugurated and better crops were being got, but when it was found on the Borders that the hills and dales yielded most profit when improved breeds of sheep were reared, and that a sheep farmer from the southern dales offered a rent of £350 for a sheiling in Glengarry for which others paid only £15 the temptation to most landlords was irresistible. Though it involved hardship to the natives they were not allowed to stand in the way and in 1763 the laird of Balnagown took the initiative and after some experimenting, he in 1781 offered a farm to a Mr Geddes who is believed to have been the first sheep farmer in the north of Scotland. The people saw themselves deprived of their holdings for sheep and gave the farmer all the annoyance they could. They shot or drowned many of his sheep but yet Mr Geddes was able to pay his rent and grow rich though the seasons were bad enough. In 1782-83 the crops were an entire failure over the whole Highlands. So hard pressed were the tenantry that a gathering of lairds and their factors was held in Tain on 10th December 1783 "in order to take into consideration the state of the tenantry in that part of the country and to form some plan whereby they might convey some effectual relief to their distressed situation." The minutes of the meeting at which Donald Macleod of Geanies presided say, "the gentlemen present having taken the state of the country into their serious consideration, and having maturely and deliberately reasoned thereon, they were unanimously of opinion that the situation of the whole of this country is extremely critical, and that if severe and harsh means are adopted by the proprietors of Estates in forcing payment of arrears at this time, though the conversion should be at a low rate, it must have the effect of driving the tenantry into despondency, and bring a great majority of them to immediate and inevitable ruin ; and in so doing will go near to lay the country waste, which to the personal knowledge of this meeting, has been for these two hundred years back over-rented ; and if once the present set of tenantry are removed, there will be very little probability of getting them replaced from any other country."

For all this the people continued to feel the pinch of poverty and Sir George Mackenzie said that they were prejudiced against "improvements," as the formation of sheep farms was called. At last in the Autumn of 1792 men were despatched to make public proclamation at all the churches in Ross and Sutherland that the hated sheep were to be gathered and driven across the Beauly. In response the people began at Lairg and drove before them every sheep they could find in Lairg, Creich, and Kincardine. In four days they had thousands of sheep driven out of Easter Ross as far as Alness. Here the drovers were met by the sheriff accompanied by Sir Hector Munro of Novar

and a party of the 42nd Regiment which had made forced marches from Fort George. At sight of the soldiers the drovers fled. Several of them were caught, tried at Inverness, and had heavy sentences passed on them, but they soon escaped from prison. General Stewart of Garth says, "It would appear that though the legality of the verdict and sentence could not be questioned, these did not carry along with them public opinion, which was probably the cause that the escape of the prisoners was in a manner connived at; for they disappeared out of the prison, no one knew how, and were never inquired after or molested."

For some time after this things went on quietly, notwithstanding the hardships endured by the failure of the crops in 1808 and 1818, until in 1820 Munro of Novar resolved to remove the Culrain tenantry to the number of between two and three hundred. The tenantry knowing that they owed him no rent, resolved to retain their holdings. They therefore resisted the officers employed to serve the summons of removal. In order to enforce the execution of the writs the sheriff of the county went to Culrain accompanied by twenty-five soldiers and a body of gentlemen from Easter Ross. On approaching Culrain the progress of the party was interrupted by the appearance of a crowd of between three and four hundred people, chiefly women, and men in women's clothes, who rushed on the soldiers, attacked them with sticks, stones, and other missiles and compelled them to retreat. The soldiers fired several rounds of blank cartridge but the people were not terrified. Then one of the party used a ball cartridge by which one woman was fatally, and one or two less seriously, injured. Of course the "civil" power was in the end victorious and this "improvement" also was effected at Culrain. Small landholders were thereafter gradually removed in several other districts and the fertile large farms of Easter Ross formed.

In the New Statistical Account the ministers of Kilmuir Easter, Nigg, Logie Easter, Rosskeen, and Kincardine comment on the result. He of Kilmuir says, "The great evil which requires to be remedied in some way or other is the fluctuating state of the population in consequence of the arable land being in the possesion of a few, which, however much it may tend to the agricultural improvement of the parish, certainly is not calculated to improve the state of the population. In consequence of this many of the people are always on the wing, and shifting from one parish to another, in quest of a better place or of more congenial employment; thus rendering in a great measure migratory the instruction which they receive."

Since then things had to be adjusted after the passing of the Corn Laws but the farms have increased in fertility so that now it can truly be said that life has little better to offer than the lot of an Easter Ross farmer, while the lot of the farm servants has been ameliorated in many directions.

Probably nothing affected the progress of the people so much as the making of roads which were begun to be seriously made when the pro-

visions of the Statute Service Road Act of 1720 were adopted and bye laws made for enforcing the Statute Labour Act or commuting it by money payments. The greatest step in this direction was the making of the parliamentary road from Perth to Wick, completed in 1821, and which effectually linkedthe district to the rest of Scotland. In 1809 a "Diligence" began to run from Inverness to Tain on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and from Tain to Inverness on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Much was made of the fact that the 44 miles could be covered in one day. The upkeep of these roads was so heavy that toll-bars were placed here and there along the route and were certainly bars to progress until the Ross and Cromarty Act of 1866 abolished them, and now the roads in the district are as good as any in Scotland.

The railway was opened to Invergordon in 1863 and to Bonar-Bridge in 1864.

ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.

IN EASTER ROSS there are no fewer than thirty-one churches, of which the Church of Scotland has ten, the United Free Church, twelve; the Free Church, seven; the Free Presbyterians and the Episcopal Church, one each. All the clergymen having charge of these separate congregations live in unity and those of the several denominations exchange pulpits occasionally, but this happy condition of affairs has been reached only after some considerable heart-burnings and heart-searching on the part of the eminent men who in the past officiated in the district, and because of the broad view taken of their duties by those at present occupying Easter Ross pulpits.

The story of the religious history of the district centres chiefly round the churches of Tain, Fearn, and (in a lesser degree) Nigg.

Tain owes its first notice in history to St. Duthus who was born here, educated in Ireland, and obtained such an accurate knowledge of the Scriptures that he became "Chief Confessor of Ireland and Scotland." To this place the remains of this "godly and learned man" were translated about two hundred years after his death which occurred in 1065. From him Tain takes its Gaelic name of *Baile Dhuthaich*, and it is quite possible he had something to do with making the place a sanctuary and so gave the Burgh importance nearly a thousand years ago. The chapel in which he is supposed to have worshipped was destroyed in 1427, and the ruins well preserved still stand. Before then (circa 1370) there was built the old church of St. Duthus possibly by William, Earl and Bishop of Ross, who would have the help of the pilgrims attracted to it in the hope of miraculous healing—as at present they are drawn to such places as Lourdes and St. Anne's de Beauprè, and leave their thank offerings. Thus we know that Sir James Douglas of Dalkeith left for it his "robes of cloth of gold and silk and his furred robes."

In the time of James III. the Church was by Papal Bull raised to the rank of "Collegiate" with a Provost, five canons, two deacons, a sacrist, and three choristers. This Bull is still to be seen in the Town Clerk's office. James IV. also in his various visits contributed to its upkeep. Because of its eminence in affairs ecclesiastical there must have been regular communication between the church dignitaries of Tain and the south, and thus the Easter Ross people early became imbued with the thoughts of the men who brought about the Reformation in Scotland, and when leaders like Munro of Fowlis gave the weight of their influence to the new doctrines preached by the Reformers there is little wonder that Tain should be the first town in the north to embrace the reformed religion. So strong indeed was the tide that Nicolas Ross, the then Provost of Tain, voted in the Parliament of 1560 for the suppression of

the church in which he held office. The people also became so zealous in furthering the new doctrines that the Good Regent Moray presented them with a beautifully carved oaken pulpit which, when St. Duthus Church stood vacant, had some of its ornamentation broken or carried away but which has been replaced by an exact replica which is now one of the sights of the town.

But the Reformation had also the effect of taking away the peculiar efficacy of the place as a holy shrine, and pilgrims no longer resorted to it, and as about that time laws were more justly administered criminals and "broken men" in decreasing numbers, and with less security, fled to it for sanctuary. From that time to this, however, it continued to be a centre of light, learning, and commerce for the whole surrounding district.

Some of the emoluments or chaplainries pertaining to the old church here were converted into bursaries to help young men to study at the Universities. One of these bursars was John Munro who afterwards became minister here, and he was brave enough to attend, at Aberdeen, an Assembly interdicted by James VI. For this he was summoned before the Privy Council and though the majority of those who "compeared" with him submitted, Mr Munro maintained that the Assembly at Aberdeen was "a verie lawful General Assembly." For this "contumacy" he was imprisoned in Doune Castle but escaped and resumed his work at Tain, but the Crown withheld his stipend. The people saw to it that their minister was not starved out. The Privy Council was not thus to be baulked and therefore addressed a strong letter to the Town Council on the iniquity of their allowing "a person standing under His Majesty's offence to have so peaceable a residence as well as the free exercise of his calling among them" and ordering them to imprison him. It does not seem clear how the Council acted but this brave minister died five years afterwards.

After the Restoration of 1660 three ministers of the district were ejected, viz.—Rev. Thomas Ross of Kincardine, Andrew Ross of Tain, and M'Killigan of Alness, as well as the famous Thomas Hog of Kiltearn, who was a native of Tain. The sympathy of the people was evidently with the "outed" ministers, but an Episcopalian was incumbent of St. Duthus from 1666 to 1700.

Then there was a sensational struggle to have the minister of Tarbat "translated" to Tain. The manner of this translation is curious. The story goes that a number of strong good people from Tain went one Sunday morning to Tarbat, took the chosen minister out of his pulpit, carried him to Tain, placed him in the Regent Moray's pulpit and asked him to deliver the sermon he was to have preached at Tarbat.

After this minister's death in 1744 the magistrates agreed to give a unanimous call to the minister of Auldearn, and in order that the call might be unanimous and harmonious, declared "if any of the burgher inhabitants will give opposition, the Council will look on the

same as very unkind and undutiful. as they wanted a speedy comfortable settlement to prevent the abounding sin and wickedness of the place."

In 1797 Angus Macintosh, D.D., was translated to Tain and died there in 1831. It was he who, after he on a Sunday morning got a newspaper with the news of the victory at Waterloo, saw it his duty to take the paper with him to church and read out to the people with much acceptance the story of that victory. As a preacher he was said to combine all the excellencies of M'Phail of Resolis, Fraser of Alness, and Porteous of Kilmuir Easter. He died in 1831 and was succeeded by his son, Dr. Charles C. Macintosh, in 1831. In common with most Highland ministers he "came out" at the Disruption. There have been other ecclesiastical sensations in Easter Ross churches since but none of such importance as this, and at present it would appear that the next will be the day on which it is declared that the United Free Church has entered into union with the Church of Scotland and the bitterness of years absolutely buried.

FEARN.

Fearn occupies a prominent place in the ecclesiastical history of Ross because of the somewhat strange history of its Abbey Church. It would appear that when William the Lion was in the north he built not only a fort on the Nigg Sutor, where the present Admiralty Fort is, but a castle at Edderton to overawe the inhabitants of Easter Ross, and when not long after it became fashionable for the nobility to build abbeys, Farquhar, Earl of Ross, in 1230, had one erected at Fearn in Edderton. The story of this Earl's reason for founding it as sometimes given is that when he accompanied his sovereign, Alexander II., to London, he met a famous French champion whom he challenged to mortal combat. Before engaging his foe, Farquhar in his terror, vowed that if the Almighty helped him to win he would found an Abbey. The Earl slew his opponent and on his way north called at Whithorn and brought with him some of the relics of St. Ninian and two canons.

"Malcolm of Galloway" was the first abbot of the new abbey and conducted its affairs with great piety and judgment for fifteen years. After about twenty years the priests, according to one authority, because the devotions were interrupted by the ferocity and savageness of the neighbouring inhabitants, transported the abbey "for the more tranquillity, peace and quiet thereof" to its present site and gave it the name by which it was at first known. Another story is that the churchmen found their lands at Edderton rather confined, and not so fertile as they would have wished, and therefore got a new bull from the Pope for building the Abbey where it now stands in a fertile and extensive plain. Earl Farquhar, the founder, is buried within this Abbey and a stone effigy marks the spot where he lies.

In 1338 the Abbey was re-built, while a Mark Ross was abbot and later the convent ventured to reject a presentee of the Prior of Whithorn.

Fearn Abbey.

There was also a stuggle between another abbot, Thomas M'Culloch and Andrew Stewart, Bishop of Caithness, in which the former was ousted from the abbey and went to Mid Geanies where he erected a private opposition chapel. The most famous of all the abbots, however, was Patrick Hamilton, who received the benefice when quite a child, though it does not seem probable that he lived here. He was the proto-martyr of the Reformation. He studied at St Andrews, travelled in Germany, imbibed the Lutheran teaching at Wittenberg, and embodied his theological convictions in a set of articles called "Patrick's Pleas" which is thoroughly Lutheran in standpoint, form, and expression, and it would seem for a time as if it were he, rather than Knox, who was to give his impress to the Reformation movement in Scotland. The church took alarm at his preaching and James Beaton, Archbishop of St. Andrews, enticed him to St. Andrews, where at a trial he was found guilty of thirteen different articles of heresy, and was burned at the gate of St. Salvator's on 28th February 1528, and "his reek infected as many as it did blow upon."

He was succeeded by Donald Dunoon, who came from Argyllshire and grew wealthy here. The lands of Cadboll, once abbey lands, passed into his hands. His nephew Andrew succeeded to these lands and was the second laird of Cadboll of that name. About that time there was also a Sir David Dunoon who had property in the neighbourhood. It is interesting to note that although the lands of Cadboll have changed hands several times during the past three centuries, there are still families bearing the name of Dunoon in Easter Ross, no doubt descendants of this ancient family. He was succeeded by a Robert Cairncross, who was appointed because he was wealthy and was able to restore the abbey which was then badly out of repair. Nicolas Ross of Tain was also in charge for a time. The next abbot, Thomas Ross, who was also Provost of the Church at Tain, and Vicar of Alness, had to face troublous times, during which he lived in Forres. The kind of trouble to be dealt with may be inferred from the story of the complaint made by William Gray to the Privy Council in 1569. He tells that when after preaching he had descended to administer the Sacrament, one Robert Lennox, whom he debarred from the Communion, in a great fury and rage came to him with a drawn sword, with which he struck him and would have killed him but for the interference of the parishioners who stopped him. Lennox did not appear when summoned to trial, was declared a rebel, put to the horn, and had his goods forfeited.

In 1599, most of the lands belonging to the Abbey were made the Barony of Geanies and granted to Sir Patrick Murray, who did not find them profitable, and in 1607 or 1617, all the other lands belonging to the Abbey and not included in the Barony, were annexed to the Bishopric of Ross and this institution after existing for nearly four hundred years became extinct.

The Abbey is now the Fearn Parish Church. In the story of "The Washing of the Mermaid," Hugh Miller in Scenes and Legends graphically describes the fall of the roof of the Abbey on a Sunday morning in 1742 while the congregation was worshipping, a catastrophe in which thirty-six persons were killed and many more so dreadfully injured that they never recovered.

This place is certainly worth a visit by any one interested in the history of Ross-shire.

NIGG.

The parish of Nigg has borne its share in the ecclesiastical strife of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. From 1729 to 1752 this parish enjoyed the ministrations of Mr Balfour, an eminent and successful divine in his time, but on his death, owing to a Royal presentation being given to, and accepted by a Mr Patrick Grant, regarding whom unfavourable reports reached the parish, the congregation resolved to do all in their power to prevent his settlement in Nigg. The majority of the members of the Presbytery sided with the congregation in their opposition and refused to induct him. The Assembly acquitted Mr Grant of the charge brought against him and again ordered the Presbytery to induct him. A minister was sent to Nigg to explain the Assembly's decision. He reported on his return that he found only two servants and therefore he did not preach but that he left the edict in the keyhole of the church door. On hearing this the Presbytery determined to disobey the Assembly's order. Again it went to the Assembly which threatened the Presbytery. The latter in alarm agreed to induct Mr Grant, but when the day came, only four members were present, and according to Scott's *Fasti*, two of the four men were found at six o'clock in the evening to have withdrawn in fear, leaving the Presbytery without a quorum and nothing was done. A third time Mr Grant appealed to the Assembly and a motion was made that the whole Presbytery of Tain be deposed instanter, but this was lost as against one that the Presbytery be solemnly rebuked, and the obnoxious presentee was inducted to "the bare walls" of the church of Nigg. It was at one of these Presbytery meetings that the famous scene occurred which Hugh Miller so graphically describes in Chapter X. of *Scenes and Legends*, when Donald Roy, the famous and venerable second sight elder of the congregation, appeared and with prophetic fervour warned them that the blood of the people of the parish would be on their heads if they dared to induct Mr Grant, which so terrified them that they on that occasion quickly carried a motion for delay. Mr Grant acted as pastor for about thirty years after his induction. The people, however, refused to attend the Parish Church, and built for themselves a meeting house at Ankerville. For a time they were without any minister, but in 1760, they heard of a young man who was in Inverness and could preach Gaelic. He came to Nigg, but it appeared that while he was in Inverness he had fallen into debt, and only three

NIGG CHURCH.

years later his landlady found out where her erstwhile lodger was. She set the machinery of the law in motion, and a messenger-at-arms was sent out to arrest him. The men of Nigg were in Logie that day cutting peats, but the women on hearing ot what was to happen to their minister, met in a body at the Red Bridges, filled their pockets with stones and chased him to within two miles of Tain.

In 1765, the Presbytery of Dunfermline and Perth, as there was no Secession Presbytery further north, inducted a Mr Buchanan from Callander. During the last year of Buchanan's ministry, the heritors resolved that he must have no successor, and thought the best way to do this was to deprive the congregation of their church. A day was appointed for demolishing the building, but no one in the parish would do it. Next day, however, a squad from Logie came and knocked it to pieces. As it was known that the church stones were to be used in the building of the Shandwick Mansion-house, one of the people pronounced a curse on the proprietor and his mansion ; and the remarkable thing is that the mansion was never finished, and stands to this day a saddening sight with its walls unfinished, and now crumbling to ruin, with bats, moles, and rats as its only inhabitants, the red stones of Nigg being conspicuous owing to the lime never adhering to them. A second church was then erected on the Pitcalnie estate. It was thus it came about that before the union of 1900 there were only three United Presbyterian Churches on the mainland, north of Inverness, viz. :—Wick, Tain, and rural Chapelhill in this parish.

The bell of Nigg Parish Church bears the inscription, "Michael Bvrgerhvys, me.f. 1624. Soli Deo Gloria," while the present church was built on the old site about 1626. The story goes that the people of Nigg and Fearn were expecting bells for their churches from Holland by the same vessel and deputations from both congregations went to Cromarty on the same day to carry them home. After some jollification, they were both crossing to the Nigg side by the same boat and during the passage quarrelled and one of the bells was thrown overboard. Both parties were determined to bring home a bell and had a regular fight, in which it is said the Nigg men won, and this Dutch bell still rings the parishioners to worship.

There is another famous bell, large and well-toned, in the Parish Church of Kincardine, and which has been in regular use since 1778, On a marble tablet under the belfry is the following inscription :—

This Bell, Captured from a French Ship of War
of 74 Guns, was Gifted
By Admiral Sir John Ross of Balnagown, Bart.,
in the year 1778,
To the Parish of Kincardine

"When Britain's navies did a world control,
And spread her empire to the farthest pole;
High stood our hero in the rolls of fame,
And Lockhart then became a deathless name,

This bell no more shall witness blood or gore,
Nor shall his voice mix with the cannon's roar;
But to Kincardine by the hero given,
Shall call the sinner to the peace of heaven."

In the other parishes there have been clergymen who were famous over a wide area for their eloquence and spirituality of their preaching like Rev. John Porteous who was minister of Kilmuir Easter from 1732 to 1775; Rev. Dr Bethune, minister of Rosskeen between 1717 and 1754; and the Rev. Thomas Ross of Kincardine, who as a Covenanter was imprisoned in Tain in 1675, and to whom Rev. James Fraser of Brea and Culross dedicated his memoirs.

There were in those days "men" in every parish, many of whom possessed not only of the highest character because of the sanctity ot their lives but because of their gifts of oratory as well. Some were possessed even of second sight. Several of these second sight stories are told by Hugh Miller regarding Donald Roy. Of another, Alexander Ross of Edderton, similar tales are also told.

Town Hall, Tain.

TAIN.

THIS ancient Burgh, still regarded as the capital of Easter Ross is beautiful for situation, placed as a native poet sings, "Between the heather and the sea," and well merits its Gaelic name of *Baile Dhuthaich Boidheach* (the bonnie town of St. Duthus). Its situation gives it enviable advantages. Thus, it is built on terraces which rise up from the sea level and so its drainage is perfect. It is guarded from the wet west winds by a semi-circle of mountains and thus has a low rainfall, but yet an abundant supply of excellent water. It is in the centre of a fertile farming district, while the wooded uplands and the wide sweeps of the Dornoch and Moray Firths, make the outlook quite picturesque.

From the top of the Clock Tower may be seen the Hill of Tain, Ardlarach, Struie Hill, glimpses of the Kyle of Sutherland with its enclosing hills, Skibo Castle (the place Mr Carnegie selected for a residence with the world before him to choose from), Dornoch with its cathedral, the monument to the first Duke of Sutherland on the top of Ben Bhraggie with Dunrobin Castle apparently nestling close to the seaside below, Brora, and the Ord of Caithness. On the other side may be seen the hills of Banff and Moray, and nearer, Nigg Hill, where the North Sutor fortifications are; Tarbatness lighthouse, Portmahomack and Inver, the Fendom and the Morrich, as well as the whole golf course.

In the town there is much variety in the arrangement of the streets and, as in all old towns, a few of the streets are narrow and in them the houses are arranged unconventionally, but many of them have gardens, some of which are terraced. All houses are nicely built of white sandstone from the hill of Tain quarry. High Street is the chief business centre, and in an open space on one side stands a beautiful decorated Gothic monument to the memory of Kenneth Murray of Geanies. Here are the Court house, Council Chambers, and the old Tower by the doorway of which stands the old Market Cross. One of the best known buildings is the Royal Academy, established by charter in 1813, and is the only Secondary School north of Inverness. It is endowed, ably conducted, and continues to maintain its long established high reputation as the educational centre of a wide district. There is also a handsome Town Hall, as well as a Carnegie Free Library.

The town is by no means a manufacturing centre and the existence of so many shops stored with such a variety of goods is explained by the fact that it is the shopping centre of several parishes.

There is one building (St. Duthus Church), of which the town is justly proud. Some of its history has been told in a previous chapter. It was used for public worship up to 1815, after which it fell into disrepair, but in 1877 it was restored, and an hour or two spent in and around it gives

one a feeling somewhat akin to that which a stranger experiences on his first visit to Westminster Abbey, and the place may now in a sense be considered the Valhalla of Easter Ross.

On a bracket in Regent Moray's pulpit may be seen the old world sandglass by which in former times the length of the service was regulated. Fixed to the walls are many memorial tablets to such men as Thomas Hog, "that great and almost apostolic servant of Christ," to whose memory "this tablet is erected within the walls where in youth he worshipped," and Patrick Hamilton, the youthful abbot of Fearn who was burnt at St. Andrews, Dr. Gustavus Aird, Ex-Bailie Wallace, and Dr. A. Taylor Innes.

The beautiful memorial windows are certainly a striking feature of this church. One is to the memory of Dr. Angus Macintosh and his son, Dr. Charles Macintosh, both for many years in succession ministers of Tain. The lower part of this eastern window is divided by massive stone pillars or sashes into five parts, and placed in each of these are floral scriptural devices containing the following texts, "I am the bread of life," "I am the Rose of Sharon," "I am the true vine and the lily of the valley," "His fruit was sweet unto my taste." Each of the divisions is filled with harmonious colours representing the various flowers, fruit, etc., referred to in the texts.

The large west window is a four light one and the incident depicted on it is "John Knox reading the Confession of Faith to the Scottish Parliament of 1560." The scene is the Parliament Hall, Edinburgh. In the right centre panel the throne is seen vacant with the crown, sword, and sceptre lying thereon ; a little lower than the throne sits the Regent Moray with an expression of fixed attention to what is being read. In the left centre light Knox is represented as reading from a manuscript addressing himself specially to the Regent. In the right light the Duke of Chatelherault is seated engaged in conversation with another courtier. Beside him is Nicolas Ross, Provost of St. Duthus and Abbot of Fearn, dressed in monkish costume with shaven head and cowl. In his left hand he holds a crosier. In the left panel Munro, 17th Baron of Foulis is represented as just after entering the hall in riding dress. At the back are a number of soldiers, while at the top of the same panel is seen a gallery, from which a crowd of spectators eagerly regard the scene below. The minutest details of historical costume, of oak parquetery flooring, and of the royal chair, have been attended to.

The window on the south wall, next to the east gable, is a three light one. The historical scene represented is that of King Malcolm Canmore conferring the Royal charter on Tain. In the centre panel Malcolm and his queen stand in the foreground, both wearing light coronets, the king bearing in his left hand a sceptre. In the left panel the Provost of Tain is seen kneeling bareheaded receiving the charter, while behind him are some of his companions. In the right light St. Duthus is represented bearing a book in one hand and a bishop's staff in the other.

St. Duthus Church, Tain.

On the centre window in the south wall the subject represented is Paul preaching before Sergius Paulus.

On the same side and next the south door, there are represented in the three panels "The angel's announcement to the shepherds," "The Nativity," and "The Presentation." A small single panelled window on the north wall next the east gable illustrates the parable of the talents.

Altogether the church is now one of the most ornate historical buildings in Scotland.

After all, the people are the most interesting feature of the town. One does not need to be long in Tain to see that there is no hustle here ; on the contrary, there is about those who have been resident here for some time that cultured Oxford lackadaisical air which seems to indicate that life were not worth living if they were driven from pillar to post. Business with them is a good thing, but for them life does not consist in unceasing efforts "to make a pile" for some successor to enjoy. Rather are they like the Athenians of old intent on hearing some new thing, and so on every alternate Friday which they call "Corn Market Day," many of them are with the numerous visitors from the surrounding country quietly pacing up and down High Street, at shop counters, or in hotel lounges discussing sometimes the current price of corn and farm produce and oftimes current politics. Here again no one seems in a hurry, but socially this foregathering makes for good fellowship and the cementing of friendships.

The spell which the town and district throws over its sons and daughters is evident when one gets to know the great number of those who having made a competency elsewhere return to their native town to spend the evening of their days in its delightfully calm human atmosphere. For such of those as can enjoy them, as well as for the youth, there are many societies and clubs. There are churches of at least four denominations, and for business purposes there are branches of no fewer than four Scottish Banks, viz :—British Linen, Commercial, North of Scotland and Town and County, and Bank of Scotland, as well as an Easter Ross National Security Savings Bank.

There is a Y.M.C.A. and a Y.W.C.A. There are Freemason, Oddfellows, and Good Templar Lodges, Nursing Associations, Curling, Golf, Bowling, Lawn Tennis, Football, and Clay Pigeon Shooting Clubs, Territorials and Boy Scouts. All these in a town of about sixteen hundred of a population means that there are many people here with time and money to spare.

INVERGORDON.

THE Burgh of Invergordon stands, as has already been pointed out, on a promontory which gives it not only a commanding scenic situation but has helped it in the formation of a commodious harbour which has done much for the district. The town itself consists principally of one long broad street with many side streets built at right angles. At present it is plain that any description of the town as it is, must in the course of a year or two be completely out of date, as there is much activity in the erection of all kinds of buildings. There is now in course of erection more large oil tanks for the navy, new hotels, club houses, and dwellings of all kinds to meet the requirements of those who have business in connection with the navy.

It is only this year (1914) that Invergordon celebrates its jubilee as a burgh, though it has for much more than fifty years been a busy seaport town in regular communication with such places as Cromarty, Inverness, Aberdeen, London, etc.

Only two or three years ago the inhabitants were debating as to how its trade and commerce could be improved, and plans for making it a desirable seaside summer resort were thought of, but the making of the Cromarty Firth a naval base has altogether altered the outlook. The inhabitants were never of the type that looked simply to the past, rather have they been looking to the future, and now, that a future is assured them they have acquired quite an American atmosphere of keenness and hustle, and much business is daily being done at the commodious and well equipped shops here.

The town possesses since 1870 a handsome town hall, Italian in architecture. The pediment shows a sculptured figure of Neptune with his proper attributes of cornucopia, bulrushes, water urn, etc. It has seating accommodation for five hundred people. A noticeable building is the United Free Church which is Gothic in style and cruciform in plan, with a spire 160 feet high. The Established Church of the parish is situated more than a mile to the west of the town. There is a handsome well-built and excellently equipped academy here with accommodation for about four hundred pupils, many of whom travel to it long distances daily by rail, etc., because of the excellence of education got here. There are as yet branches of only two banks here—the Commercial and the North of Scotland, both of which have handsome buildings in the main street.

In 1902 King Edward and Queen Alexandra landed here, and had a right royal welcome. To commemorate that visit a handsome lamp and fountain were erected in the most central part of the town.

Invergordon Ferry.

The town can also boast of being the first to publish a newspaper in the county, "The Invergordon Times," which has been regularly issued since 1855.

Here the Freemasons have a lodge as have also the Oddfellows and Good Templars. There are Literary, Dramatic and Debating Societies, tennis, bowling, cricket, golf and football clubs. There are Dorcas and Temperance Societies, and, most popular of all, a Regatta and Boating club, indeed the Invergordon Annual Regatta is one of the most popular events in the whole district and year by year so excellent is the programme submitted that to witness the events, large and fashionable crowds gather into the town during the two days over which the Regatta extends.

THE FOUNDER OF INVERGORDON.

Sir William Gordon, the first baronet of Invergordon, he who gave the town its present name, which really is quite a modern one, was in his time one of the best known public men in Scotland. This Sir William succeeded his father Sir Adam in 1700 and was one of the few people who made money of the South Sea Bubble. He ultimately became a rich banker in London. Where he got his original wealth is a mystery, but rich he was, and honours fell to him in rapid succession. He was created a baronet in 1704, was made a burgess of Edinburgh in 1708 (his ticket is preserved among the Laing charters in Edinburgh University), he represented Sutherlandshire in five Parliaments (1708-1727) and Cromartyshire from 1741-1742. He was commissioner for stating debts due to the army and he had the satisfaction of having two grandsons ennobled (Lord Melville and Lord Cromarty). He had much influence with the Earl of Sutherland and had a residence at Uppat near Dunrobin. He bought the estate of Inverbreakie from the Macleod family (who had borrowed the money from his father) and re-christened it *Invergordon*. But he had his difficulties with the customs and with a Ludovick Gordon of Elgin who in 1713 brought an action against him. Ludovick alleged that he had gone to Sir William's house to demand payment of bills amounting to £93. Instead of paying, Sir William set two servants on him and they abstracted his pocket book containing the bills and retained his jockey coat, his sword and his whip. Sir William was put on trial and won, but Ludovick was not to be baulked and had a fight even up to the House of Lords for the price of his coat, sword and whip with £100 as damages.

Sir William took the side of the house of Hanover in 1715 and Horace Walpole declared that the Prince of Wales saved Cromartie after the '45 in return for Sir William's "coming out of his deathbed to vote for Sir Robert Walpole at the Chippenham election." Sir William died at Chelsea in 1742.

The second baronet of Invergordon was Sir John, who was M.P. for Cromartie from 1742 to 1747 and from 1754 to 1761. He also was a personage of considerable influence politically, as is shown by the most

notable event in his career—his strong and partly successful plea for the life of his nephew, Lord Macleod, who had become implicated in the Jacobite rebellion. The third baronet was Rev. Sir Adam Gordon and Sir George was the fourth. By a not uncommon fate in families who have striven to be great the baronetcy of Invergordon ended in an imbecile, for Sir Adam was insane, and having been baronet for ten years died unmarried in 1850. There were heirs, but the baronetcy has been allowed to lie dormant. These heirs are probably descended from the uncle of the last baronet. This uncle, a John Gordon, was a drover and cattle dealer, and dormant baronetcies were not much in his line, and thus ended the baronetcy of Invergordon.

Invergordon Castle.

ALNESS.

THE VILLAGES.

THERE is quite a large number of villages in the district, all having features and attractions peculiarly their own. At nearly all of them visitors are able to find convenient quarters. Thus at Alness as well as at Tain (at Loch Eye) and Ardgay fresh water fishing can be had, while at Balnabruach (Nigg), Saltburn, Balintore, Portmahomack and Inver boats may be had for pleasure sailing or sea fishing. Hill climbing may be indulged in from Alness, Tain, Edderton, and Ardgay. The most important of these villages at present is

BRIDGEND OF ALNESS.

BEFORE the Reformation this village was called Obsdale and was included in the parish of Nonikiln where the ruins of a church still stand in the centre of an old graveyard. During the "killing time" Alness was the only place in Ross-shire where the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was publicly dispensed. While the service was being held at the house of the Dowager Lady of Fowlis soldiers arrived to apprehend the officiating clergyman, Rev. John Mackillican. Sir John Munro, the famous soldier was there, got the clergyman under his chair and while the soldiers were searching the house kept his seat with his ample military cloak around him, pleaded indisposition and saved his minister. A huge granite slab with suitable inscription marks the spot.

In the stirring times of "the Fifteen" Alness Bridge was the scene of a sharp skirmish. The Earl of Seaforth with a force of three thousand men drove from the Averon (Alness River) loyal bands of Rosses and Munroes under Sir Roderick Munro and the Mackays of Sutherland, and forced them to retreat over the Struy to Bonar. This battle provided material for the satirical Gaelic poem "Caberfeidh."

At present Bridgend increases in size and importance because of the enterprise of its chief proprietors. There are fine quarries which furnish stone for a wide district. There are sawmills galore and two famous distilleries, Dalmore and Teaninich, and the people employed at these works with those connected with the cultivation of the excellent farms in the neighbourhood make Alness quite a stirring little place. It has no fewer than three large hotels and two inns and there are within a two-mile radius five churches. Those who want amusement are also catered for, as near it is a nine hole golf course, a nice bowling green, a club, Territorial Hall, Masonic Hall, etc. To the top of Fyrish is a splendid climb and a wide expanse is seen from the summit.

SALTBURN.

SALTBURN consists of a long stretch of houses beautifully situated on the edge of the Firth and is sometimes considered as a suburb of Invergordon. The houses all seem commodious and have neat gardens.

BALNABRUACH.

BALNABRUACH (Nigg) is a long scattered village under the shadow of the North Sutor batteries and is in consequence growing in importance.

FEARN.

FEARN, about a mile from the railway station, is also a non-congested village of well built houses. It has a commodious Public Hall and the Abbey referred to in "Ecclesiastical History." A notable feature is the large up-to-date shops where a large amount of business is done.

BALINTORE.

BALINTORE is a quaint old fishing village cosily situated, with a fairly good harbour at which a considerable amount of shipping is done.

Between Tain and Portmahomack lies the fishing village of Inver. Round about is rich agricultural land and many small crofts.

PORTMAHOMACK.

PORTMAHOMACK does not now enjoy the prosperity it once did as it has lost somewhat of importance since the Highland Railway was opened and steam applied to fishing boats. It still however has considerable shipping trade. With its golf course, facilities for bathing and boating, it is an ideal place for a quiet restful holiday. Suitable accommodation is available at moderate charges. It has an excellent Carnegie Library. The old parish church was formerly called St Colman's and was founded by St Colman, and there still is a St Colman's well in the village. About a mile from the Port is Balone Castle described elsewhere. Three miles away is the Tarbatness Lighthouse, which is a prominent object in the landscape over most of the sea coast from Aberdeenshire to Caithness. At night it shows a succession of six flashes every alternate fifteen seconds. It is one of the highest in Scotland, being set on comparatively low ground and those approaching it will find it more distant in reality than in appearance. A fine view is obtained from the top on a clear day.

EDDERTON.

EDDERTON is five miles from Tain. The road to the village runs close to the railway and seashore. This village also is a non-congested one. A little beyond the village is the remarkably defined hill of Struie, which

is a prominent landmark in all views of the district and a visit to its summit will well repay the climb because of the extensive view of nine counties got from its crest on a fine day. The interesting sculptured stones to be seen at Edderton are described in the chapter on that subject.

ARDGAY.

THOUGH Bonar Bridge Station is in Ross-shire the village of that name is in Sutherland. The village here is Ardgay, which is a well built place and is the shopping centre for a wide district. There are some remarkably fine buildings and a commodious public hall. The scenery round here is particularly fine.

From Tain visits can easily be arranged to Skibo and Dornoch by crossing the Meikle Ferry at Ardjachie. Cromarty can be reached from Tain by crossing the ferry between the Sutors, though it can perhaps be more conveniently reached by steamer from Invergordon.

THE CASTLES.

THERE are two very old uninhabited castles in the district, Balloan or Balone in Tarbat and Loch Slin in Fearn. There are also the beautiful modern castles of Ardross, Invergordon, Balnagown, and Carbisdale.

BALONE CASTLE.

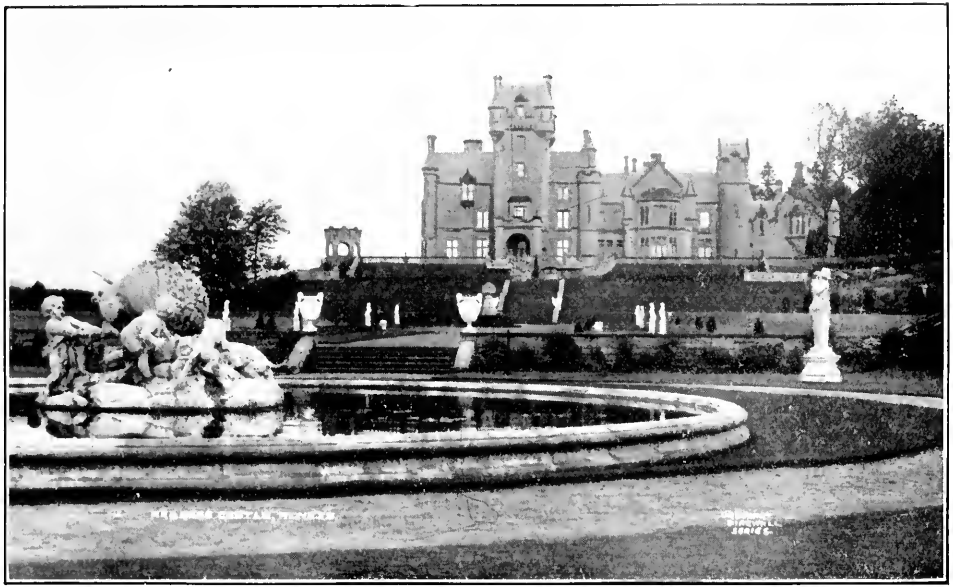
BALONE was certainly built for strength as its strategic situation on the high cliffs about a mile from the port, and its ruins, show. It is approached by the King's Causeway and the Big Causeway and is typical in its interior arrangements of the period during which it was built.

It appears that William, Earl of Ross, received the surrounding lands by charter from King Robert the Bruce in 1314, and built the castle about that time, in 1340 the lands were confiscated for his taking part in the rebellion against James the Second. Later in 1476 they were restored by James III., to Elizabeth the wife of the last Earl of Ross. In 1516 after this lady's death we find Sir David Dunbar of Durris in possession for nine years, and thereafter Dunbar of Tulliglamis. In 1610 James VI. granted to George Munro of Meikle Tarrel the lands of Easter Tarbat with the "fortilace" of Balone Castle. In 1623 we find Roderick Mackenzie of Coigach in possession, and later on his grandson the great George Mackenzie, Lord Advocate to Charles II.

The last to inhabit it was the crafty Lord Tarbat previous to his building New Tarbat House. It has not been inhabited for more than two hundred years.

LOCHSLIN CASTLE.

WHAT remains of this old castle stands on an eminence about a mile north-east of Loch Eye and about four miles from Tain and must have been a remarkable building when erected over five hundred years ago. It was certainly built as a place of security in the days of violence, and commands a wide view of the countryside. Its shape according to the Ordnance Survey Report and the Statistical Account resembled two figures, nearly square joined together at the corners where there was a staircase to the top. The lesser one then looked to the west, and the greater to the east. It was fortified with three turrets and was considered impregnable when erected. For long it was a stronghold of the Earls of Cromarty but the hands of thoughtless vandals have been upon it and now only one high corner remains to show how stately the building was and how well built by stones of all qualities, and it now appears as if a blast of winter wind would blow down the last remnant and then the last of the stones which composed it will likely be removed to build byres and dykes.



Ardross Castle.

ARDROSS CASTLE.

THE Castle is a modern building, romantically situated on the north side of the River Alness, about five miles from Alness Station.

The Castle, which is a good specimen of the old Scotch Baronial style of architecture, was commenced by the late Sir Alexander Matheson about the year 1849-50 in what was then a comparatively bleak upland glen, though now a richly cultivated district, with thriving woods, rich pasture, gardens and green fields.

The building, which was commenced as a small shooting lodge, was extended by Sir Alexander Matheson, and the Public Room, Hall, and Tower added.

Sir Kenneth Matheson, with the superintendence of Mr Ross, Architect, Inverness, further extended the Castle, and subsequently extensive alterations were made by Mr Perrins.

The Castle, which is well seen from the eastern approach, is entered through a stone groined Porte Cochere, under massive crow stepped gables with angle turrets. On the left of the entrance are the Public and Reception rooms, to the right the Library, Billiard room and Great Hall, which is a feature in the house. It measures 65 ft. by 25 ft., has a lofty timber roof, oak floor and panellings, richly decorated and emblazoned roof.

The gardens, which were extensive, have recently been further extended, laid out afresh, terraced, etc.

INVERGORDON CASTLE.

INVERGORDON CASTLE is situated about one mile north of Invergordon.

The new castle is built just in front of the site of the old castle, which was burnt down, and the remains of the old house incorporated into part of the offices attached to the new building.

The present house was erected in 1872 by R. B. A. M'Leod of Cadboll, from designs of Dr Alexander Ross, Architect, Inverness. It is a handsome square block of Elizabethan architecture, with a square battlemented tower with angle turret at south-east angle, and the elevations enriched and relieved with bay and corbelled and mullioned windows. The principal entrance is through the base of the Tower, and the Public Room, Hall and Staircase are particularly handsome.

The grounds are extensive and well wooded, and there is a fine old avenue of trees with rich underwood and rare evergreens, etc.

BALNAGOWN CASTLE.

BALNAGOWN CASTLE, the property of Sir Charles Ross, Bart., of Balnagown, is a venerable pile, beautifully situated amidst extensive stretches of green sward on two sides, and overlooks deep and wide ravines

on the other two sides. The grounds are extensive and well wooded, and the Balnagown River rushes down through the ravine in many cataracts.

Artistic bridges have been thrown across at frequent points and this adds much to the interest of the valley. Beautiful Italian gardens are also laid out along the ravine.

The castle itself is a very fine example of the Scottish Baronial style, with many turrets and battlemented parapets. The severity necessarily associated with this style of architecture is considerably softened by the introduction, at a date long after the erection of the castle, of a very fine conservatory, which has been skilfully designed to harmonise with the castle. This conservatory forms a great feature both externally and internally, and is well stocked with orchids and other rare and beautiful plants.

Internally the castle is designed on broad lines ; the public rooms are all spacious and conveniently grouped, and characterised especially by the excellence of the decorative plaster work which is a great feature of most of the rooms. On the ground floor the outer door opens into a fine entrance hall, and the smoking room which enters off the hall is remarkable, as some very ancient paintings were discovered on the original wall after having been covered up by panelling, lath, and plaster, for generations. On the principal floor, the drawing room is an exceptionally fine room, and with the anti-drawing room which communicates with it by a wide doorway, occupies the whole breadth of the castle. The gallery alongside the drawing room contains a very fine collection of marble statuary.

Generally speaking Balnagown Castle represents one of the most interesting and delightful of the ancient Baronial Castles of Scotland.

On the other side of the railway and not far from Kildary Station is New Tarbat House.

CARBISDALE CASTLE.

CARBISDALE CASTLE, Culrain, the residence of Countess Bubna, about eighteen miles from Tain, is a prominent feature of the landscape as seen from the railway, as it occupies a magnificent site on an outjutting rocky spur of the densely wooded Hill of Lamentation, and overhangs the waters of the Kyle, 180 feet below.

The Castle is a very modern building having only been completed during this present year. Built of the local gray whinstone, relieved by dressings of a fine light coloured freestone from quarries near Elgin, it presents a very pleasing example of the so-called domestic architecture, and combines many features characteristic of the builder and architects. While suggesting many styles, it has as a whole a harmonious effect.

The South or principal façade—rising from a broad stone terrace—with its tall mullioned windows and ornamental pediments is reminiscent of the Elizabethan period ; while, dominating the whole, the lofty clock

tower, with its massive battlemented and turreted belfry, gives the impression of the stern strength which belongs to the Scottish Baronial style.

The interior is rich in decoration, works of art, and furniture, reflecting the artistic tastes and travels of the owner.

The various galleries and reception rooms are arranged according to periods representing Tudor, Jacobean, Queen Anne, etc., with fine ceilings in classic and other designs ; tapestry, Spanish leather work, and panelling in many rare woods cover the walls.

A long and lofty gallery is devoted entirely to statuary and pictures, in which are displayed to advantage many respresentative works by past and present Masters, including Romanelli, Scorrie, and the Scoto-Italian Lorenzo M'Donald amongst sculptors, and paintings by Burne-Jones, Landseer, Peter Graham, etc.

The grand staircase leading from this gallery is a noticeable feature of massive carved oak, and representing fruit, flowers, and animals ; it is a faithful copy of an original in an old Essex Manor house, by that master of wood carving, Grinling Gibbons, whose work for Charles II. still adorns several of the Royal Palaces.

From the terrace a fine view is obtained of the beautiful and varied scenery of this part.

Historically the district around this castle is interesting as being the scene of the last stand of the Marquis of Montrose in 1650. Relics of the battle have been found in recent years, and many cairns on the pine-clad hill side remain on the supposed line of retreat. The cairns are by tradition said to cover the remains of the faithful Highlanders who fell, and respect for such tradition will always protect them from desecration.

TAIN GOLF COURSE.

BY A MEMBER OF THE CLUB.

TAIN has an excellent golf course. It lies along the shore of the Dornoch Firth, and is within five minutes easy walk of the town and of the railway station. Other towns have frequently to provide courses at great expense, but Tain has always had suitable land of its own, the Royal Burgh having been for centuries an extensive land owner. If it should develop into a popular and crowded golfing resort, it has in the Morrich More ample provision for half a dozen additional courses. It is interesting to observe that in that case play could be brought to within two miles of the famous Dornoch links, though the journey from Tain by rail is considerably over forty miles.

The present course was laid out in 1890 by old Tom Morris of St. Andrews. Some slight alterations were made in 1912, so as to bring the starting point nearer the town. All the best putting greens are according to the original lie of the ground, improved by sanding and rolling. The excellent quality of the turf on the coast is shown by its being in great demand for bowling greens. The hazards, which are many and varied, are almost entirely natural. Beyond the limits of good play they comprise bents, broom, and whins, while elsewhere there are numerous well-placed sand bunkers. The undulating character of the ground affords interesting problems to the finished golfer in regard to stance and line. At the starting and finishing holes, the windings of the Tain river supply situations calculated to test the nerve of any player.

The Clubhouse, conspicuous from the railway, stands on a picturesque mound close to the bank of the river. Built in 1912, it has spacious locker rooms for gentlemen and ladies, and a large octagonal dining room which is a feature of the building. During the summer and autumn it is well patronised by the sporting tenants from the surrounding districts, who often travel long distances by motor for the pleasure of a game without over-crowding and under the best conditions.

The following is a more particular description of the various holes :—

First (360 yds).—From the first tee at the Clubhouse, an easy drive over the old river bed carries to a stretch of rising ground, from which an iron reaches the green. There is a belt of rushes to the right for a sliced drive, and a public road and wire fence sixty yards from the green must be carried by the second shot.

Second (290 yds).—"The River." The drive should clear a wide expanse of rough ground and land the ball on low lying turf by the river. Even here the ground is undulating and the stance not always normal,

GOLF HOUSE, TAIN.

which often makes the second stroke a trying one for the novice. The green lies immediately beyond the river and is well guarded all round by hazards—a very interesting hole.

Third (360 yds.).—"The Knowe." The drive is over a formidable bunker, and for the player who pulls, is a very sporting shot over a bend of the river as well. The second has to carry a ravine 120 yards broad in order to land the ball on the Knowe, where the green is. Unless this is done, the player is left with a blind approach from 15 feet below the hole.

Fourth (500 yds.).—"The Long." A recently formed hole, this is probably the least characteristic of the course. The lies are irregular, the turf allows little run to the ball, and the green is tricky.

Fifth (140 yds.).—A topped ball is fatal at this hole as there is a deep ditch 50 yards from the tee, otherwise there are no difficulties for a straight ball. It has been played in one by a lady.

Sixth (310 yds.).—"The Bunker." The green is nicely guarded by a sand bunker in the face of some rising ground. As the green almost touches the bunker and slopes away from it, an accurate approach shot is necessary.

Seventh (300 yds.).—"The Morrich." This, at right angles to the last, is a pleasant one for the beginner. He has only to carry the bunker last mentioned in order to find an unlimited stretch of easy turf before him. The long driver on the other hand, should he slice, may find himself out of bounds or in ruts to the right.

Eighth (160 yds.).—"The Short." Here the putting green is partially covered by a steep bank on the left. Short balls to the right are badly punished in whins. The situation is novel and interesting.

Ninth (355 yds.).—"The Desert." This hole presents no difficulty except that the drive must be good, in order that the second may carry a double line of hillocks and bunkers 100 yards short of the green, which is the most open of any on the course.

Tenth (320 yds.).—"The Garden." Somewhat similar, but at right angles to the last. This hole has a bunker and wire fence extending right across in front of the green, which is prettily placed and sufficiently guarded.

Eleventh (360 yds).—"The Alps." A fascinating hole by the sea in a cupped green surrounded by hills. The position of this hole is marked by two prominent hills between which the approach shot has to be played. A four at this hole must always give pleasure.

Twelfth (210 yds.).—"The Plaids." A good drive is required to take one to this green which is upon rising ground. Beyond is out of bounds, but a wire fence with a close meshed net prevents a low ball from running over.

Thirteenth (315 yds.).—"The Kelpie" is so called from the extensive water hazard to be found there in winter. It is dry in summer. To clear this requires a drive of 120 yards on to the opposite ridge. A well placed

ball gets an excellent lie and the green with a slope against the shot is an easy one to approach.

Fourteenth (400 yds.).—"The Well." Though fairly long, this is probably the easiest hole on the course. The lies are all good and the ground level, and though the green is picturesquely situated and well protected, "Bogie" figures should always be obtained.

Fifteenth (315 yds.).—"The Braehead." This hole is parallel to No. 3. The ravine 120 yards wide has to be carried from the tee. There are numerous sand hollows short of the green to be avoided. If the green is overrun the result is disaster, as the ball only comes to rest in bad country 25 feet below.

Sixteenth (150 yds.)—"The Burn." This is one of the prettiest of short holes. The flag is fully in sight on a beautiful green far below the level of the tee, but closely guarded on three sides by the river. Every chance is given the player to obtain a 2, but a bad ball of almost any description brings deserved punishment.

Seventeenth (180 yds.).—This hole is somewhat similar to the sixteenth, the tee being upon the edge of a high bank with the green in view below. A double bend of the river has to be carried by the drive. The stroke must be played judiciously, as a ball over running the green may find itself in a bunker or in the river.

Eighteenth (300 yds.)—Except for short drives which are not straight, the home hole presents no difficulty. The green is large and level, and the hazards are not formidable unless the player makes them so.

The fifth, eighth, sixteenth, and seventeenth holes have each been played in one stroke. The second hole has been played once only in two. Bogey for the course is 80. The amateur record is 72. There is no professional record at present.

In regard to the course generally, it may be remarked that it enjoys a singular freedom from wind and rain which seem to expend themselves upon the surrounding hills.

There are few days in the year when play is impossible to the enthusiast. The sandy soil and smooth turf makes walking at all times dry and pleasant. The scenery is varied and beautiful and the forms and colours of the surrounding hills distinct and harmonious.

Tain Golf Course.

CASTLECRAIG GOLF COURSE.

FOR NIGG AND CROMARTY.

BY A MEMBER OF THE CLUB.

THIS Course is situated on the north shore of the Cromarty Firth, directly opposite Cromarty. It serves the people of the parishes of Cromarty and Nigg, on the south and north sides of the Firth. It is reached by ferry from Cromarty (ten minutes) or by conveyance from Nigg Station (five miles). The course, originally a private 9-hole one, was extended to 18-hole about three years ago. It is now controlled by the Castlecraig Golf Club consisting of about eighty members. During the months from Spring to Autumn when the fleet is stationed at Cromarty and Invergordon it is much frequented by the officers. There is a convenient little Clubhouse fitted with lockers. The course is an excellent one, and is capable of great development and improvement. The soil is sandy and inclined to moss, making the surface rather soft. The greens are excellent and have been formed from the natural turf, and are good evidence of what can be made of it by care and attention. The holes provide plenty of variety, both with regard to length and difficulty. There are two splendid short holes, surrounded by natural hazards, a ditch having to be crossed in each case. About eight of the holes may be reached by the long player with two strokes, but for the average player they mean three. Three of the holes are three shot holes, the others drive and iron or drive and pitch. The hazards throughout are natural, there being only one or two artificial bunkers. They consist of hillocks, ditches, sandy patches with bent and rough ground usually to punish the unwary player who leaves the fairway.

To take the holes in detail—the first hole is a three shot hole for the ordinary player, but may be reached by two extra good strokes. The fairway lies over undulating country with a wide sandy gully to trap a topped drive. The second or Sea Hole is a plateau, guarded in front by a deep gully, while beyond lies the beach. It can be reached by a drive and short pitch. The third and fourth are new holes and still rather rough, but promise to become splendid holes. Here straight driving is essential as rough country lies on either side. The third or Quarry Hole usually requires three strokes, and the drive must be carefully placed clear of a long ravine extending in the direction of the hole. Going to the fourth, rough ground and a road have to be carried from the tee, after which the passage is easy. The green lies on a low plateau. The fifth or Spion Kop, is one of the familiar kind where the

green lies on the top of a steep hill or escarpment. This escarpment is the line of the old beach when the sea stood higher than it is at present. On the way to it the player has to carry a fairly high hill with his drive, and at the same time avoid a quarry on the right. The sixth is the Short Hole, a mashie shot over a deep hollow and ditch with the green on the top of the bank beyond. At the seventh once more a ridge has to be crossed with the second. The eighth is flat, but two ditches have to be crossed on the way. At the ninth a ridge must be carried with the second, after which the green is within easy pitching distance. The outward half extends to 2600 yards, and the Bogey score is 40.

Coming home, the way to the tenth hole lies over a series of hillocks with a burn on the right all the way. Three shots are usually necessary to reach the green. The eleventh, a short hole, is a tricky iron shot with a ditch in front and on the left, a wall on the right, and rough ground beyond. The twelfth is a drive and pitch with a burn to trap a topped drive. At the thirteenth or long hole we descend the old coast line and reach the older part of the course, where the ground is firmer. A big natural bunker has to be carried with the second shot. The fourteenth hole lies in a cup and provides an admirable approach shot. At the fifteenth and sixteenth we again cross the burn. The sixteenth green is an undulating one on the side of a hill and requires a carefully placed approach if the succeeding put is to stay near the hole. The seventeenth may be reached with a good drive. The last hole lies over undulating ground, the green itself being in a wide hollow near the Clubhouse. The inward half is 2455 yards in length making the total length 5055 yards or just under three miles. The Bogey home is 40, making the Bogey for the round 80.

An account of this admirable course would be incomplete without at least a reference to the magnificent view, which embraces a considerable part of the Moray Firth coast, from the Binn Hill of Cullen in Banffshire to Nairn, and the Cromarty Firth to the foot of Ben Wyvis.

TARBAT GOLF COURSE.

BY A MEMBER OF THE CLUB.

THE Tarbat Golf Club is of comparatively recent origin having been formed in 1909. Its membership, as is to be expected, is small, but what the Club lacks in numbers it makes up for by the enthusiasm displayed for the Royal and Ancient Game. During the season, however, the Course is well patronised by summer visitors who are attracted to it in annually increasing numbers.

The Tarbat Golf Course is laid out on high gronnd above the picturesque, old world fishing village of Portmahomack, where excellent but somewhat limited accommodation can be obtained. The country is of the true golfing character abounding in natural hazards, and covered with fine springy turf. In laying out the course, it may be mentioned that no bunkers had to be constructed. All that were necessary were already there in abundance. There are no really long holes, but all are of a highly sporting character, and each presents its own special difficulties. Thus it takes a really capable player to get "up" on the Colonel.

The Bogey score for the nine holes is 36, and this it may be said has rarely been accomplished.

Originally a 6-hole course it was afterwards, through the kindness of Mr Mackenzie, Bindal, who gave additional ground for the purpose, extended to nine holes. On both occasions the plans were drawn up by Mr John Sutherland, the energetic secretary of the Royal Dornoch, and when this has been said it may be taken for granted that the very best possible use was made of the ground available.

The first hole, 265 yards, is a bogey four, and with straight hitting presents no difficulties; but a pulled shot lies out of bounds, while a slice sends the ball into country abounding in uninviting lies from which recovery is difficult.

The second is a short blind hole situated at the bottom of a saucer-shaped depression surrounded by benty hillocks. A clean hit mashie or mid-iron shot should find the green, but if not trouble is in store.

The third—also a blind hole—is 275 yards in length. A pulled tee shot here goes out of bounds, or, short of that, lies in very difficult benty country; but if this be avoided the fortunate player should get down in four.

The fourth can be reached with a good cleek or sammy shot, but as the green is perched on a hillock and slopes away from the tee, it frequently happens that the ball overruns the green into undesirable

country. In front this green is guarded by two gaping sand bunkers and on either side are benty slopes very difficult to negotiate.

The fifth is 280 yards in length, and the green lies alongside the churchyard wall. It thus sometimes happens that the mighty hitter has to search for his ball amongst the tombs of his ancestors. The bogey of this hole is four.

The sixth and seventh are each about 285 yards, and both are well guarded by natural hazards, so that to get down in five at either of them requires accurate play.

The eighth is a short hole, 120 yards, but a very tricky one. Situated on the top of a high plateau it is guarded in front and behind by huge sandpits from which recovery is very difficult. On either hand are steep-sloping benty sides, so that the unlucky player who fails to find the green with his mashie may make an appalling addition to his score.

The line to the ninth lies over most undesirable country, and this hole is most safely played by a dog's leg to the right. With care the green can be reached in two, but a pulled shot finds the most fatal country on the whole course, disused gravel pits diversified with whins. But even when the green is reached one's troubles are far from ended. On account of its undulating character, a player frequently has the mortification of spoiling an otherwise good score by the astounding number of putts he takes on this unlucky green.

PERSONAL NAMES.

NOTWITHSTANDING all that has been done in promoting intercommunication between this district and the rest of the country it is surprising to find how decendants of the clans originally holding possession here seem to stick to their own old homes. This is the home of the Clan Ross and out of a voters' list (Parliamentary and Parochial) of 2,554 no fewer than 495 bear the name of Ross. After them come the Mackenzies with 218 representatives. The following table shows the ten most popular surnames with their distribution in the various Parishes.

Surname.	Kincardine.	Edderton.	Tain (including Burgh.)	Fearn.	Tarbat.	Logie.	Nigg.	Kilmuir.	Ross Keen (including Invergordon.)	Total.
Ross	68	38	95	64	29	35	34	29	103	495
Mackenzie	8	5	63	24	16	9	10	14	69	218
Munro	15	8	30	13	19	13	9	13	72	192
Mackay	10	11	26	21	16	7	2	7	26	126
Macleod	14	4	19	9	6	4	11	4	35	106
Macdonald	7	2	15	13	8	8	6	7	28	94
Fraser	9	3	21	12	10	4	6	6	22	93
Urquhart	4	0	11	8	4	6	1	5	14	53
Sutherland	0	1	13	6	7	1	3	1	7	39
Campbell	5	1	4	2	3	0	2	7	10	34
{ Other Surnames }	103	52	74	150	136	83	49	111	346	1104
TOTAL	243	125	371	322	254	170	133	204	732	2554

There are representatives of nearly every other clan. There are Camerons and Chisholms, Gunns and Grants, Macleans and Macraes, Morrisons and Murrays, Sinclairs and Forbes, etc.

As to Christian names by far the most common here as elsewhere is John, of whom no fewer than 390 are on the lists, and there are altogether 67 bearing the name John Ross. Next in order comes Alexander which name appears 286 times. The others most common are William, 270; Donald, 236; George, 139; James, 138; David, 87; and Robert, 53. Next in order follow Hugh, Andrew, Murdo, Finlay, Thomas, Duncan, Angus, and Henry. Many of the surnames can easily be accounted for by those who know the social history of the district. Thus the Border surnames appeared when sheep farming was introduced, Vass and Skinner when a social experiment was made in the seventeenth century. Sport and commerce account for quite a large number of the English names found in the lists.

PLACE NAMES.

MUCH interest is now being taken in Place Names and a volume regarded everywhere as an example of how such work should be done is *The Place Names of Ross and Comarty*, by Dr W. J. Watson, Rector of the Royal High School of Edinburgh. By his kind permission the following list of the derivations and meanings of the more common of those in Easter Ross is given here.

PARISH OF KINCARDINE.

KINCARDINE.—Gaelic, Cinn-chàrdain "cinn" from "Cean" head; càrdain of Pictish origin. The word appears in Welsh as "cardden" a wood, when Kincardine means Woodhead or Wood-end. The name originally applied only to the immediate neighbourhood of the church whence it extended to the district round by the church, *i.e.* the parish.

CARRON.—There are two rivers Carron in Ross and some half dozen elsewhere in Scotland all characterised by roughness of channel. The root is Kars, rough.

ALT EITEACHAN.—Probably from éiteach, root of burnt heather. Hence "an fhéil éiteachan," the Kincardine market. The old established winter market still held at Ardgay, is said to owe its name to a certain quartz stone (clach éiteag) the old custom being that the market was held wherever this stone happened to be at the time. The stone was sometimes shifted west by the Assynt men, and east by the men of Ross, but finally it was built into the wall of the present Balnagown Arms Hotel at Ardgay, and so the market has ever since been held here.

ARDGAY.—G., Ard gaoith, windy point. A deed, granted in 1686 to erect it into a burgh of Barony was never carried into effect.

GLEDFIELD.—This is a translation of Gaelic leth-chlamhaig, half (*i.e.* half strath) of the buzzard.

AMAT.—G., Amait from Norse á-mót, river-meet, confluence, to wit, of the Carron and the Blackwater rivers.

SALLACHY.—On record as pasture land of the Abbey of Fearn; from Saileach, the old form of "Seileach," willow.

INVERCARRON.—Estuary of the Carron.

LANGWELL.—Norse, Lang völlr, long field.

CROICK.—G., a' chròic. It may be a locative of cròc, an antler, thus meaning "a branching glen or side glen" which suits the locality.

OYKELL has been identified with Ptolemy's Ripa Alta. It must also be identified with the Norse Ekkjals-bakki, *i.e.* Oykell Bank.

LAMENTATION HILL.—G., Creag a' chóinneachan, rock of the mossy place. The name was given long before the battle of 1650.

CULRAIN of old Carbisdale. The modern name is said to have been imported from Coleraine in Ireland.

EDDERTON.

EDDERTON.—The traditional explanation is eadar dùn, between forts.

CARRIEBLAIR.—G., blàr a' charaidh, caraidh means "The Grave plot." A stone here is said to mark the grave of Carius.

BALBLAIR.—G., baile a' bhlàir, plain town or "stead."

STRUIE.—G., an t-srùidh. Strùidh appears to be best regarded as a contracted form of sruth-aidh, an extension of the root of sruth, stream.

TAIN.

TAIN.—Tene (1227), Thane 1483. It is difficult to offer a satisfactory etymology.

TARLOGIE.—Talorg, was a Pictish proper name from tal, brow, and the root arg, white.

THE FENDOM.—G., Na fànaibh from fàn a level place. The English form is a curious corruption.

MORANGIE.—G., Móiristidh, from mór-innse, with developed t. The whole means big haugh.

ALDIE.—G., alltaidh, burn place from alt.

GLASTULLICH.—Green hillock.

MORRICH MORE.—G., a' mhoraich mhór, a large, low lying sandy flat by the sea shore.

FEARN.

FEARN from Fèarna, alder. As explained in the history the monastery was founded at Fearn in Edderton and was translated to this place about 1225. It was first called New Fearn then simply Fearn. The parish of Fearn was until 1628 included in the parish of Tarbat.

CADBOLL.—Norse Katta-ból, cat stead. It appears that the rocks facing the Moray Firth were of old a haunt of wild cats.

CADBOLL MOUNT.—The curious story of Cadboll Mount is told by Bishop Forbes. The Laird of Cadboll was on bad terms with his cousin Macleod of Geanies, and built the "mount" to look down on his lands. Geanies replied by planting a belt of trees which in time shut out the view.

BALLINTORE.—G., Bail' an todhair, bleaching town. The name goes back to the time when flax was cultivated in the north.

PITKERRIE.—The local derivation is céir, wax: the place was covered with whins from which the bees made wax.

RHYNIE.—G. ràthan, from ràth, circular enclosure or fort.

LOCHEVE.—G., Loch na h-uidhe. "Uidh" here means "slow running water between two lochs."

LOCHSLIN.—G., Lochslinn from slinn a weaver's sleye.

BALNAGORE.—Baile nan gobhar, Goat's town.

TARBAT.

TARBAT.—G., Tairbeart, a crossing, portage, isthmus.

WILKHAVEN.—A translation of Port nam faochag.

PORTMAHOMACK.—G., Port ma Cholmaig. St Colman's port. Colman's well is near the library.

TARREL.—Probably "tar" across, and "ail" rock, over cliff.

GEANIES.—The modern form is an English plural, Gàan is probably a Gaelic plural of Norse "gja," a charm, from the precipitous rocks on the coast.

NIGG.

NIGG.—G., 'n eig, the notch, from the V-shaped gully on the edge of which the parish church stands.

SHANDWICK.—G., seannduaig from Norse sand vík, sand bay.

RARICHIE.—G., Rath riachaidh, fort of scratching (as by brambles), The local derivation is as follows—The Picts lived at Cadha 'n ruigh, and in spring they would say "tiugamaid 'bhàn 'dheanamh rotha riachagan," "Let us go down to make rows of scratches" (to sow seed in).

PITCALNIE.—G., Baile chailnidh; "l" silent in English; an obscure name.

PITCULZEAN.—Revived as the name of Westfield; G., Bail' a' choillean, town of the little wood.

CASTLECRAIG.—Here are the new Admiralty Forts and here may yet be traced the lines of the castle built by William the Lion in 1178. Its name was Dún Sgàth, fort of dread, now English Dunskaith.

ANKERVILLE.—Formerly Little Kindeace. It was bought in 1721 by Alexander Ross, late merchant at Cracow, who changed the name.

CULLISSE.—G., Cùl an lios, nook of the lios; Lios, now garden, formerly meant an enclosure or fort with an earthen wall.

TOBAR NA H-IU.—A well near Fairy Hill, a Celtic hill fort at Easter Rarichie. Hard by this well once stood a tree whose branches bent over the water, and while the tree stood the well cured "white swelling." The tree was cut and the well struck. The following is a translation of a Gaelic rhyme which shows the sort of feeling with which such wells were regarded.

"Well of the Yew, Well of the Yew!
To thee it is that honour is due;
A bed in hell is prepared for him
Who cut the tree about thine ears."

LOGIE EASTER.

LOGIE.—G., Lagaidh, "lag" a hollow, with aidh, ending. The name is derived from the little hollow in which the old church at Marybank stands.

CALROSSIE : or Glossery, which is glasaraidh, green place or green shieling.

ARABELLA.—Formerly "the Bog." It was reclaimed in the earlier half of the nineteenth century by Hugh Rose of Calrossie, who named it after his wife, Arabella Phipps, "the beautiful."

GLASTULLICH.—Glas, green ; tulaich, hillock.

PITMADUTHY.—G., Pit mhic Dhuibh, better. Macduff's stead.

SCOTSBURN.—The name has now shifted from the burn to the farm of Scotsburn. There are local traditions of a battle fought here by the Scots supported by cairns in Scotsburn Wood and by the name Lochan a' Chlaidheimh, sword loch.

POLL A' BHATHAIDH.—Drowning pool near the Free Church Manse. This was the drowning pool of the barony of Nigg. The hanging hill is near it—G., Cnoc na croiche. Further south near the railway is Cnoc a' mhoid, the moot hill.

KILMUIR EASTER.

KILMUIR.—G., Cill-Mhoire, Mary's Church.

MILNTOWN.—G., Baile mhuilinn, with its mills.

NEW TARBAT.—Socalled by the Cromartie family from Tarbat, where their former seat was.

KILDARY.—G., Caoldaraidh, from caol, narrow. The "narrow place" is the river gorge between Kildary farm and the parish of Logie.

BALNAGOWN.—Smiths' town. The modern Gaelic is as the English form. Near the castle is a steep old bridge over the river, still in good order, known as "The King's Bridge," and traditionally associated with James IV. It leads to the King's causeway, the old road to Tain.

RHIVES.—G., Na Ruigheannan, "ruigh" land sloping up to a hill or ridges.

DELNY.—G., Deilgnidh, "place of prickles." Here stood a castle of the Earls of Ross.

POLLO.—G., Am Pollan, diminutive of pool.

BALINTRAID.—"Baile" and "tràigh," sea shore.

KINDEACE.—G., Cinn déis, has been transferred from Nigg.

KINRIVE.—G., "ceann," head, and "ruigh," ridgy slope.

ROSSKEEN.

ROSSKEEN.—G., Ros-cuibhne, "ros" headland, referring to the promontory on which Invergordon stands. The latter part of the word means "deer horn," the reference being to the shape of the Cape.

In a field by the roadside, near the Parish Church, is Clach a' Mhèirlich, the thief's stone.

SALTBURN.—G., Alltan an t-saluinn. Explained from the tradition that cargoes of salt were hid here in the times when there was a duty payable on that article.

INVERBRECKIE.—The name is now applied to the farm lying north of Invergordon, but formerly included the site of the town. The "inver" implies a stream which must have been called the "Breakie," and is probably that which enters the firth near Rosskeen church.

INVERGORDON.—See description of the town.

NEWMORE.—G., An neimh' mhór, the great sanctuary.

CULCAIRN.—G., Cul-chàirn, back of the cairn, *i.e.*, Carn na croiche, the hanging cairn in the hill behind it.

ARDROSS.—"Ard-rois," height of Ross.

STRATHRUSDALE.—G., srath-rúsdail, Norse "hruts-dalr," ram's dale, with G., srath, prefixed. "Hrutr" was common as a personal name, and is probably so here: "Hrut's Dale." The name is interesting, and suggestive as to the extent and the character of the Norse occupation of Easter Ross.

THE SCULPTURED STONES.

THE Sculptured Stone monuments of Scotland may be considered the earliest existing expression of the ideas, and the most genuine records of the skill in art of the early inhabitants of Scotland; but now, when attention has been directed to them it is found that they are diminished in numbers and in many cases mutilated in their form. It is therefore satisfactory to know that in Easter Ross is found a number larger and of more exquisite workmanship than have yet been discovered in any one district in Scotland.

It has been supposed that the sculptured standing stones succeeded the rough unhewn obelisks which appear so frequently in Scotland, or that Christian sculptures were put on pillars previously erected, and it was a primitive custom to erect stones for purposes of devotion, memorials of events, and evidences of facts even down to early Christian times, and such monuments were distinguished by their having a cross inscribed on them. Their purpose and meaning, however, seem to have been forgotten ere the time came when they could be written, though even yet in some such form men continue to hope to hand down their memory to future times. There is no difficulty in supposing that many of our Scottish monuments are sepulchral and may mark the last resting place of the most illustrious of the early heroes and missionaries, and it is easy to understand how others would wish to be laid near the same spot, and how they would be chosen as fit sites for the churches, and those in Easter Ross followed this rule.

The labour bestowed on the ornamentation of these stones, and especially on the crosses, is quite remarkable, and some would attribute it to Roman civilization from which so much of mediæval art must have derived an impression. But if the symbols could have been derived from this source, it is difficult to explain why other countries open to the same influence do not have them. If the symbols are Christian, it seems strange that they are not found in other parts of Christendom as well as in the north-east of Scotland. The only inference open is that most of the symbols were peculiar to a people in the north-east of Scotland and were used by them at least partly for sepulchral monuments. To the question, Whence did the inhabitants of this district get their symbols? there is no convincing answer.

Of the stones in Easter Ross those best known are the Hilton, the Shandwick, and the Nigg stones which stood at no great distance from one another. They are perhaps the most remarkable in Scotland for their elaborate finish and varied representation. The Hilton stone now in "The American Gardens" at Invergordon was at some period taken

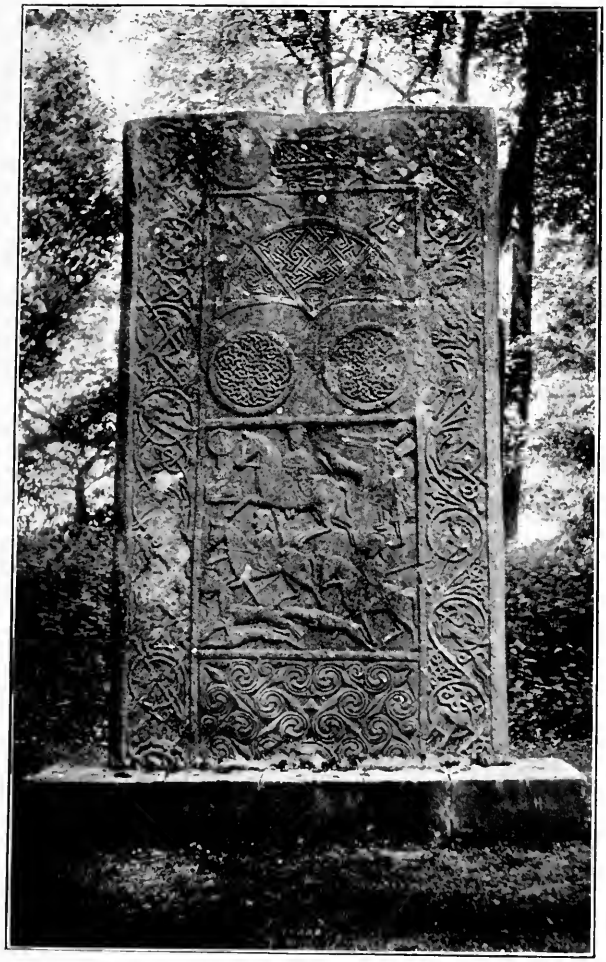
down and converted into a gravestone. For this purpose one of the sides was smoothed by erasing the ancient sculpture upon it and the following incription was substituted :—

> "He that lives weil, dies weil," says Solomon the wise.
> Heir lyes Alexander Duff and his thrie wives.

In this stone the "spectacle" ornament is transferred to the border amid the ornamental tracery, while two unconnected circles take the usual place on the face of the stone near the crescent, the whole being filled up with elaborate tracery. The two figures in the upper corner on the right hand seem to have been trumpeters. The centre is thickly occupied by the figures of men, some on horseback, some afoot, of wild and tame animals, musical instruments, and weapons of war and of the chase.

The Shandwick stone is a magnificent obelisk near the village of Shandwick. In 1776 it was surrounded at the base by large well-cut flagstones formed like steps. It was unfortunately blown down in April 1847 and broken, but soon afterwards it was, by the order of Sir Charles Ross, bound up with iron and re-erected on its ancient site. It is about eight feet high, four feet broad, and one foot thick. It has been supposed that the figures on each side of the cross, immediately beneath the transverse bars are intended to represent St. Andrew on his cross, but it may be doubted whether they are not meant to represent angels with displayed wings. Hugh Miller says that it bears on the side which corresponds to the obliterated surface of the other, the figure of a large cross, wrought into an involved and intricate species of fretwork, which seems formed by the twisting of myriads of snakes. In the spaces of the left side of the shaft, there are huge clumsy looking animals, the one resembling an elephant, the other a lion ; over each of these a St. Andrew seems leaning forward from the cross, and in the reverse of the obelisk, the sculpture represents processions, hunting scenes, and combats. The ground around was for ages used as a burying place, and all unbaptized infants of the parish were buried here up till fairly recent times. The ground around is now cultivated.

The exquisitely beautiful Nigg stone now stands under a portico at the east gable of Nigg Parish Church but it stood near the gate till 1727, when it was blown down by a blast of wind which also threw down the church belfry. Towards the end of the eighteenth century it was removed for the purpose of gaining admission to the vault of the family of Ross of Kindeace, and during the operation it fell and was broken. It was afterwards bound in iron and re-erected in its present position. The top of the stone is triangular. On the one side of this upper compartment are two priestlike figures attired in long garments, and furnished each with a book. They incline forward as if intent on reading and devotion. Betwixt them is a small circular table, which may represent an altar ; and above it there is the representation of a dove in the act of descending to carry away the sacrifice offered. It has a circular cake in its bill.



INVERGORDON STONE.

Under the table, two dogs of large size seem restrained by the priestly incantations of the human figures from executing their evil intentions. Under the triangular top and on the same side the surface contains the figure of a cross beset by serpents. The spaces above and below the arms are divided into rectangular compartments of mathematical exactness. On the other side the centre is occupied by the figure of a man attired in long garments, caressing a fawn, and directly fronting him, there are the figures of a lamb and a harp. The appearance of the chalice and host between the kneeling figures at the top is very remarkable. None of the symbols occur on this stone.

Casts of this stone are to be seen in Edinburgh, London, Dublin, and in several Continental museums.

There are fragments of a stone in the churchyard of Tarbat which formed parts of a cross which stood in the centre of the churchyard. It was however knocked down long ago by the gravedigger and broken up for gravestones.

There is a sculptured sarcophagus in the churchyard of Kincardine. The statistical account says "In the churchyard there is a stone about five feet in length, and two in breadth and thickness; it is hollow and divided into two cells. The ends and one of the sides are covered with carved figures and hieroglyphics."

In the churchyard of Edderton there is a stone on each side of which is a carved cross and below one of them is the figure of a man on horseback. In the compartment below this are two horses with their riders lined out. About a mile to the west of the Church at Edderton is an obelisk of rough unhewn whinstone which has a fish sculptured on the north side, and below that two concentric circles. There is a tradition that a battle was fought in this place betwixt the inhabitants of the country and Norwegian pirates and that the leader of the invaders—Carius—was slain and interred here, and hence the name Carrieblair.

There is, or rather was, a complete chain of dunes or brochs surrounding the parish of Edderton but the most complete of them Dunalliscaig was completely destroyed about 1818 and the material of which it consisted was used for building dykes and farm houses in Easter Fearn. There is little doubt that many of these once existed in the district but were used up by utilitarian farmers or proprietors in the same way.

Investigators are now all but agreed that these carved stones could not have been the work of the Norsemen, as Hugh Miller contends. As most of them are found in the district once called Pictland, and scarcely anything like them in other parts where the Norsemen held sway, it is fair to assume that they were the work of these Picts. As to when they were erected evidence points to the eighth century as the most probable period.

FOLK-LORE.

EASTER ROSS is not now a field in which the folk-lorist can gather an abundant harvest, nor is it likely it ever was. For many generations there have been no dense forests, neither do mists brood low over the mountains, nor treacherous moorland bogs exist from which will-o-the-wisp may spring. But the grand mountains have always been there, and even on the clearest of summer days they fade away in a covering of hazy blue something which gives an air of mystery to their majesty, and the mysterious is one of the things in which Highlanders seem to revel. And as superstition has well been said to be a weed indigenous to the human mind, there can be little doubt that the Celtic people with their emotional, imaginative nature must have peopled the mountains with fairies and goblins. There is also the mysterious ocean, and well those who get their livelihood by it know that "There is sorrow on the sea."

Easter Ross was one of the earliest parts of Scotland to be civilized, and with the growth of civilization the old beliefs and stories lost much of their significance, yet the more ignorant of the people clung to the traditional lore of the past, and though the meaning of the old stories was forgotten, conceptions that were once earnest attempts to grasp the nature of the universe, were perpetuated because they appealed to the childish imagination.

Nothing appears more evident to those who study folk-lore than the essential unity of the mental constitution of men of different races. The same stories and beliefs appear in widely different parts of the world, clothed perhaps in varying garments to suit the local environment, so that it would seem as if certain superstitions sprang up everywhere under similar social usages and conditions. The task of collecting these survivals of popular belief is annually becoming more difficult as belie in them wanes, and it is peculiarly difficult to "localise" much folk-lore, though distinctions do exist.

Here are given such as have found a home in the district, though many are even now dead. Some are common to the whole district, while some have been heard of only by a small circle. A few have been brought into the county by Southrons within the past century; others bear the impress of a hoary local antiquity.

Round all the more important events of life, from birth to death, these beliefs cling; and there are still a few people who have the notion that there are ways and means of foretelling adversity or prosperity, if not of ensuring them—all of them prompted by a desire to know something of the unknowable future.

If the course of life be followed in this way and the folk-lore associated with each stage noted, one can realise how numerous are the beliefs which are held even in such a small district as Easter Ross.

BIRTH AND INFANCY.

The day of birth, if not the hour, is significant, and the well-known rhyme is oft repeated

"Sunday's child is full of grace,
Monday's child is full in the face," etc.

As to the hour it is thought that a child born at midnight will grow up "uncanny," and if with a "caul" that it cannot be drowned and that the fairies cannot in such a case effect a change. When a child is to be carried from the room in which it is born, it is best that it should be carried *upwards* (upstairs). If this is impracticable the nurse with the child in her arms should reach the door over a chair placed in her way. Then there are quite a large number of superstitions connected with the rite of baptism, showing the good effects which at once accrue to the child because of it, and of the evils which follow if it be not performed soon after birth and in the parish in which the child has been born. It is considered very unlucky that it should be baptised in another year than that in which it was born, hence the great number of baptisms annually taking place during the last weeks of December. Whatever arrangements parents may make between themselves as to what the little one's name is to be, they take care not to let an outsider call it anything but baby until it has been christened. Even at the ceremony they hand the acting clergyman a slip on which the name is written, so that it may first be spoken by his lips. It is reckoned an excellent sign to have the child cry when the water falls on its face. When several children are to be baptised together, great care is taken that the boys are baptised first, for should it unfortunately happen that a boy be baptised after a girl and out of the same water, then it is believed that the girl will have more hair on her face than she likes, while the boy will have correspondingly less. After this when a visitor sees the baby for the first time it is lucky to place a piece of silver in its hand. If the child grasps the coin, it may be reckoned to grow up "close fisted"; but if not one may safely prognosticate openhandedness.

COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE.

Round marriage, charms, omens, divinations, and strange customs have here, as elsewhere, clustered.

A young lady can calculate the number of years she has still to remain single by counting the cuckoo notes when first she hears them in spring. There are also the Halloween prognostications, and much is made of the dreams of the "likely" sweethearts. Here, as elsewhere, it is believed that only they who are stark mad marry in May. All other months, however, are quite lucky, and though folk know the rhyme—

"Monday for wealth,
Tuesday for health,
Wednesday the best day of all.
Thursday for crosses,
Friday for losses.
Saturday no luck at all."

Easter Ross youths are quite willing to risk any day. When the day arrives, the bride ought to be careful to put on her right shoe first, as to put on the left spells bad luck ; and as to her dress, she must wear :—

" Something old and something new,
Something borrowed and something blue."

DEATH.

The years glide on, and by and by the last dread summons comes ; and here, as elsewhere, men have construed every incident out of the common course as a sign of the approach of the dark messenger. It seems strange that the howling of a dog at night is still regarded as one of the certain signs of death's coming, just as it has been in most counties from the earliest times. When horses on a road which they know quite well appear to be in terror from some cause which the driver is unable to understand, it is thought that the fear comes from a phamtom funeral seen by the animal, whose senses are more acute than those of any human being. " Corpse candles" are said to have often been seen and they are by some meant to warn the beholder that it were well that he should prepare for " the change " as death is here euphemistically called by the kindly.

There is a strange story told of the old Castle of Cadboll to the effect that though it was inhabited for ages yet never a person died in it ; and many of those who lived in it, wished to be brought out of it as they longed for death, especially one, Lady May, who resided there about 150 years ago. She was long sick and longed for death. She heard the story, asked to be carried out, and no sooner was she out than she expired.

MEDICINAL LORE.

To know medicine one must know the human body, therefore one of the first things a folk doctor notices is any peculiar mark. Thus a " mole" on the throat indicates good luck, while one on the left side of the forehead betokens misfortune, and one on the breast, poverty. The ears afford means of knowing whether people speak well or ill of us, for when the left glows hot it is certain they speak well of us, and the reverse when the right ear glows. If there be tingling in the ears, one may be sure to hear of the death of a friend soon after. An itch in the hand means that it is soon to handle money, while a similar sensation in the foot means that strange ground is soon to be trodden on. An itch on the nose foreshadows the early receipt of news of some kind—brought probably by a visitor, while an itch in the right eye is the harbinger of coming joy. Teeth widely set mean prosperity, while people having them closely set are set down as miserly, and to dream of losing a tooth betokens that one will soon have a friend the fewer.

People are always ready to get rid of warts and dozens of cures may be had for them. Some of the cures supplied the writer are : (1) Rub them with water found lying on a flat stone in a graveyard ; (2) Rub

them with pig's blood ; (3) Tie a horse hair round each ; (4) When there is a new moon, go to the seashore and wash them in mud and salt water ; (5) Spit on them each morning before breakfast time ; (6) Rub them with a snail. For a "sty" the cure is rather peculiar. Catch a black cat by the tail, pull out one hair and rub one end of it three times over the pustule.

For toothache there are also many cures, but of them all a "line" from some wise man or woman is most effectual. The "line" contains words of a semi-religious nature, and has to be worn over the heart for several days. There also still lingers a faint belief in the power of the evil eye, and stories are told of its power.

Minor ailments have their own specific cures. Thus sore eyes are believed by some to be curable by the wearing of ear-rings and one sometimes still sees a man wearing them. Some believe that rheumatism can be cured by wearing a "galvanic" ring which ought to be as effectual as a potato carried in the pocket for this purpose.

LUCK.

Many are the devices used to ensure luck. The belief that luck can be coaxed is common everywhere and the large communication which the district has had with the south is responsible for many which were unknown fifty or a hundred years ago. Thus spilling salt was not here always considered unlucky neither was it thought unlucky some time ago to walk underneath a ladder. Perhaps not many years have elapsed since the sitting down of thirteen at table was thought to mean the death of one within a twelvemonth. The breaking of a looking glass is not of great import but it is best not to see the new moon through glass or empty handed and the best thing to have in one's hand at such a time is a silver coin or a piece of woollen cloth. As regards the moon itself the belief is still held and openly expressed that a change of weather is to be anticipated at each quarter.

Luck, good or bad, was, and is, most generally belived in by those whose prosperity and livelihood depend on the uncertain result of their labours. The various means by which fishermen for example try to secure luck is most interesting. They believe it is unlucky to meet a minister as they are going to sea or to have one aboard. They believe that whistling will raise the wind. There are many quaint stories of their consultations with witches, and Hugh Miller tells a typical one regarding the Tarbat witch in Chapter XIX. of *Scenes and Legends* which is full of Rosshire Folk-Lore.

There was a belief in fairies as the old story of the Gizzen Brigs shows. This "Brig" a bank of shingle and sand stretches across the Dornoch Firth and the story of its origin is that the fairies were tired of crossing from Ross to Sutherland in their cockle shell boats and therefore began to build a magnificent gold bridge across. When the work was only

half done some passing stranger lifted up his hands and exclaimed "God bless the workmen," which is exactly what fairies cannot stand. They at once jumped beneath the waves, and as they never returned to their work it has since been the going to ruin, and is to this day a source of danger to sailors.

Tales of water kelpies and of ghosts may yet be heard round winter firesides. Peculiar things are still being done to get a glimpse of the future. But all their old world fancies are being steadily laughed out of existence and are giving place to the new order of crystal gazing, palmistry and spooks. Ross-shire people however have a more tender regard for their county on account of all these old imaginings, because they go back to the infancy of county history. They also have learned that :—

"The tree
Sucks kindlier nurture from a soil enriched
By its own fallen leaves ; and man is made
In heart and spirit from deciduous hopes
And things that seem to perish."

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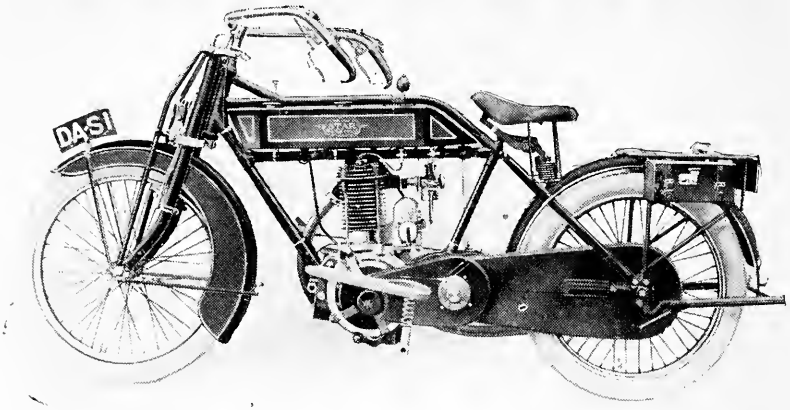

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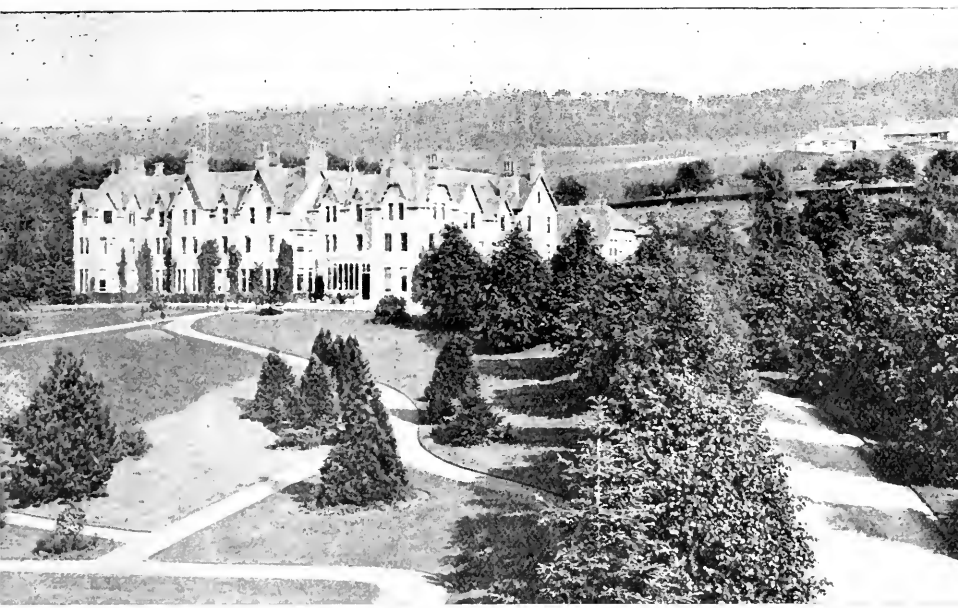

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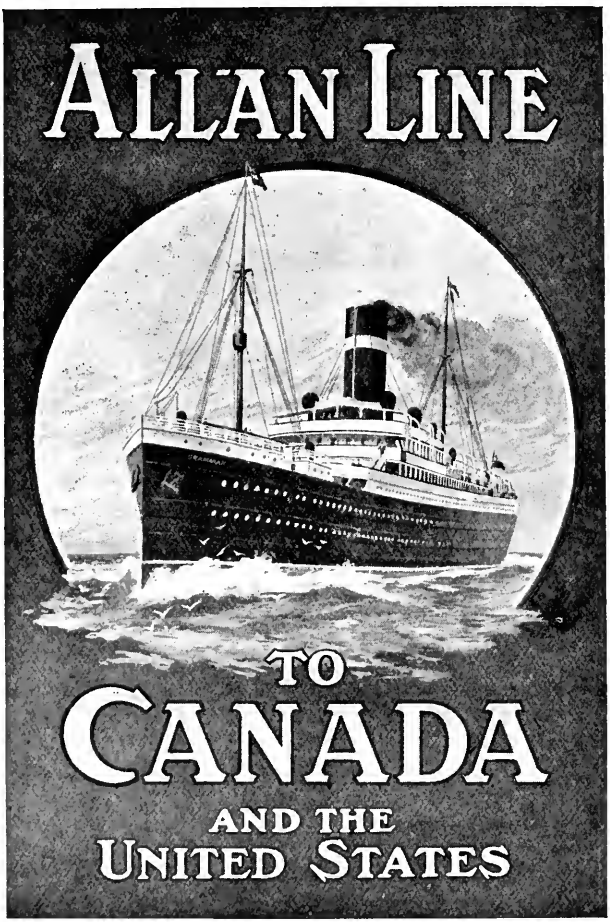
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