

HILL OF FARE.

I LEFT the town one morning lately, and not deeming it to be a matter of the least consequence where my feet might carry the other parts of my body, I found myself at the close of day seated at a table, puffing a cigar, and drinking cold grog with a friend of mine near the Hill of Fare. What a delightful paradise the country appears, after we have for months been bored almost to death with the noise, the smoke, the dust, and the humbug of a town! and nothing can afford a greater degree of pleasure than meeting with an old, and still valued friend, in some lovely spot, and sitting down after dinner, with a table drawn close to the open window, and seated on opposite sides of it, and opposite to each other, chatting over the follies of our younger years. The grass and corn fields, approaching almost to the window, afford pleasing objects for the eye to rest upon, after having had our view for a long period confined to the houses on the opposite side of the street in which we live; and the clumps of trees and the patches of heath, with which the arable land is interspersed, give relief and variety to the landscape, while the little stream, which "brawls along the wood", within a few yards of the place where we are seated, imparts a freshness to the breeze, which comes through the window, fanning our cheek, and twisting the smoke of our cigar into a thousand antic shapes. And then, to watch the glories of the sun, setting far in the west, behind the blue hills which rise majestically one above the other—those nearest appearing large and distinct masses of solid matter—those at a greater distance dim and shadowlike, and those still farther off leaving us still uncertain whether they are indeed mountains, as they seem almost semi-transparent, like a cloud. Nor must we forget the feathered warblers, pouring out their evening songs—the lark, rising on the buoyant air, and dancing lightly to the music of its own throat—the thrush, seated

amidst the branches of some venerable tree, singing a duet with its companion in the neighbouring thicket—the linnet, the finch, and the little wren all joining in the concert, and loading the air with the sweetest and most melodious sounds.

Surrounded by such objects, it is, indeed, sweet, with the friend who vis-a-vis's at the table, like the King in "Bombastes Furioso", to be employed—

"Undisturbed by State affairs,
Moistening our clay and puffing off our cares".

My friend and I had done very rational justice to his most immaculate grog, and being now somewhat sleepy, and somewhat fatigued, I proposed going to bed. Before retiring, however, it was agreed that we should on the morrow visit the Hill of Fare.

The morning was delightful, and having done the amplest justice to the breakfast, we were soon on our way to the Hill, loaded with a spy-glass, a pocket pistol, and something to satisfy the stomach. Before proceeding further I cannot help remarking, that it appears to me astonishing that so few of the many who annually leave Aberdeen in search of the picturesque turn aside from their straightforward course to visit this beautiful and romantic hill. The village of Banchory is the first place at which travellers generally stop, and the beauties of Ballater and Braemar, the sublimity of Lochnagar, the wild loveliness of the Garbh Allt, of Corrymulzie, and the Glas Allt Linns, and the impetuous grandeur of the Linn of Dee, are the common objects of admiration, and it is seldom that any other are sought for. But there are objects nearer home well worthy of a visit.

To proceed, however, the Hill of Fare is about three miles—perhaps not so much—distant from the Deeside post-road, and rises out of an immense plain. It is isolated from the range of the Grampians, commanding, from its different peaks, extensive views of the surrounding country, north, south, east, and west. Properly speaking, it is a cluster of mountains, or a number of hills growing out of one enormous base, seventeen miles in circumference.

Its elevation is not great, yet sufficiently so to entitle it to be classed with the third-rate mountains of Scotland, the height of some of its peaks above the level of the sea being by some called about 1793 [1545] feet.

There is little wood upon it, and indeed, no trees of any considerable growth. In some parts it is rocky, and in others there is scarcely a stone unhid by the heather. It is not difficult of ascent, and ponies may be ridden with perfect safety to the different peaks, whence a prospect of the country is to be had. Its roots penetrate into the vale of Echt, within a short distance of the village called Kirktown of Echt, and from this point it runs in a westerly direction till it passes Raemoir House, and the ruins of Cluny Castle, when it diverges a little to the north, and pursuing a sort of curve, embraces a large portion of the parishes of Banchory and Kincardine O'Neil. Persons from Aberdeen or Banchory village will, I think, find the best place for commencing the ascent to be directly opposite to the farm of Hatton Burn, passing the farm-houses of Craigton, at the back of which the only stream of any consequence arising out of the hill issues from a deep ravine which penetrates into the very centre of the mountain, and grows wider until it terminates in what is called the How of Corrichie, a sort of amphitheatre, on the sloping side of which the battle bearing its name was fought. At about one hundred yards west of Hatton Burn, on the south side of the road leading to Raemoir; and about one hundred and fifty yards south of that part of the mountain called Myries Hill, the gallant, but unfortunate Marquis of Montrose, pitched his camp, in one of his excursions to the north. A tradition current in this part of this country is, that it was the last expedition he conducted from the south, and that his soldiers burned some houses about Kirktown of Echt in his progress. It is further related that an old woman, who had been a sufferer by the conflagration, and who chanced to see the Marquis when a prisoner in the hands of his enemies, and while they were carrying him south, upbraided him with this act, and asked whether he remembered it. "Yes",

replied the fallen warrior, "but at that time I was a General at the head of an army, and now I am a prisoner, without a single follower".

The position which Montrose had chosen, so far as a non-military man may judge, was very judicious; as it is, on almost every side, surrounded with a marsh inaccessible to cavalry, and which even a body of infantry could not have penetrated without being thrown into some confusion. The position is slightly raised above the level of the marsh, and unless on the side towards the hill, commands a pretty extensive view of the adjacent country, while, at the same time, it is not sufficiently elevated to have attracted the observation of scouts. But the gallant General had not trusted entirely to the natural advantages of his position, but had entrenched himself on every side, while the ditch could easily have been filled with water, if, indeed, it had not been so. The south front of the camp has been destroyed by the cuttings necessary for the line of road leading from Aberdeen by Garlogie and Raemoir to Kin-cardine O'Neil, but the east, west, and north sides are still perfectly distinct, although the whole position is now under corn crop. The camp is small in its dimensions, and could not have contained a great number of men—which, indeed, Montrose never had under his command—but everything connected with this gallant man must be interesting. The place is still called by the people in the neighbourhood "Montrose's Trench".

Having satisfied our curiosity with examining this place, we proceeded on our way to the mountain, passing the farm-houses of Craigton, and crossing the Burn of Corrichie immediately behind them. The ascent is not here difficult, and a road, by which turf is conveyed from the hill, makes it still less fatiguing. Keeping this road, which leads in a northerly direction, for a mile or so, and having the burn on our left, we then diverged from the path, and in a south-easterly direction, began to ascend the sloping ridge of that part of the mountain which is called the "Tap o' Fare". This is decidedly the best way to gain the summit, for the front of the hill to the south

is in many places almost perpendicular, and besides is very rocky, whereas by penetrating into the mountain by the road I have mentioned, and ascending by the back of the hill, you reach the peak without having any very steep parts to climb.

The view, on arriving at the summit, is extensive and beautiful in a very high degree, diversified with wood, water, noble mansions, farm-houses, cultivated land, and heath-clad mountains. Directly before you, and to the south, an immense plain is spread out, bounded by the hills of Cairn-mon-earn, Kerloch, Cairn o'Mount, Clochnaben, and those adjacent. The plain itself is highly cultivated, and thickly studded with comfortable-looking cottages—the abodes of a happy and industrious race of peasants.

The principal objects in this direction which arrest the attention are Tilquihilly Castle, an old seat of the Douglasses, now the property of Henry Lumsden, Esq., and which stands on a considerably elevated spot above the south bank of the river Dee. This old castellated mansion is a very prominent object in the landscape, and adds very much to its beauty, while its deserted walls and decaying grandeur create in the mind pleasing though melancholy reflections “on the days of other years”. Nearer the river, but still upon the south side of it, Maryfield Cottage, the summer villa of the Sheriff of Kincardine, is to be seen standing close upon the bank of the river, and surrounded with young but thriving plantations. Farther to the west, and in a beautifully wooded valley, betwixt two hills covered with fir trees, is the house of Invery. A more delightful situation could not well be conceived, and from this point of observation it is seen to great advantage. Nearer the Dee, but in the same vale, stands Feugh Cottage, and a little farther on the Bridge of Feugh, and the house of Deebank, the dwelling of Colonel Wood. The situation of this last-mentioned seat is extremely fine, being placed in the apex of the angle formed by the Feugh and Dee, the Feugh joining the Dee at this place, and each adorned with trees growing close to their banks. Still

farther west the Bridge over the Dee, and about two miles farther on, the house of Blackhall, are to be seen. Crossing to the north side of the river, the little tower above the village of Banchory, the Manse, and the Church, are very prominent objects, and close at the foot of the hill, but west of your position the house of Raemoir has a fine effect in the landscape. A little south-east from Raemoir lies the Loch of Leys, with the ruins of some old castle on an island in its centre, which is thus spoken of in Sir John Sinclair's Statistical Account of Scotland:—"In the Loch of Leys there is an artificial island on oak piles, with ruins of houses and of an oven upon it; but there is no tradition concerning the use which may have been made of this ancient structure". I am of opinion, however, from an examination, that to say there were houses is wrong, as I think it is pretty evident that it is the remains of an old castle of very great antiquity. To the east, but still south of your position, the Loch of Drum, a sheet of water, gives a delightful effect to the picture which is stretched out before you. I regretted much that neither the fine old Castle of Drum nor that of Leys could be seen from any part of the mountain which I visited. The latter particularly, from its nearness, the antique beauty of its structure, and the noble trees with which it is surrounded, would, could it be seen, be a very fine object in the landscape, but a rising ground intercepts the view of both castles. Having viewed the Loch of Drum, the eye crosses the Dee again, and a slight degree to the east of the lake, rests on the House of Durris, a seat belonging to the Duke of Gordon, and on a small tower built opposite to Drum House, at a part of the river where there is a large stone, on which an individual of the family of Keith, Earls Marischal, was slain by an Irvine, in one of their feuds. Carrying the eye along the river, a bird's-eye view is obtained of almost all the remarkable places on its banks, till the view is obstructed by roots from the chain of the Grampians, or till it loses itself upon the ocean.

It is perhaps impossible to conceive a finer prospect than what I have attempted to describe, and particularly

that part of it which embraces Tilquihilly Castle, Invery House, Deebank, Feugh Cottage, the bridges of Feugh and Dee, the House of Blackhall, and the parts which are visible about the village of Banchory. It is finely wooded and watered, while the mansions and bridges I have mentioned complete the beauty of the picture. Blackhall and Invery are particularly fine when seen from this spot. Blackhall stands on the centre of an extensive lawn, a hill covered with pines rises at the back of it, and in the front the river, debouching from between two hills, is seen for a considerable distance. The house itself, as it is distinctly seen, has a grand effect. Both places give a fine idea of seclusion, and the charms with which they are surrounded must make retirement from the bustle of a town truly delightful.

Changing now your front, and looking a little to the north of east, the valley of Echt and Skene lies before you, cultivated in a very high degree. Almost at your feet appears the little village of the Kirktown of Echt, and a little farther on the House of Echt, then the Loch of Skene and the House of Skene. These are the most prominent objects in this direction, with the exception of a heap of stones collected together to commemorate the passing of the Reform Bill, and which is at once a delightful specimen of folly and bad taste. I believe it is called a tower, but it has just as much of the appearance of what I have hitherto heard called by that name as it has to Lord Brougham's nose. The view on this side is terminated by the Brimmond Hill, in the parish of Newhills. Above the village of Echt, and to the north of it, rises the Barmekin, a conical hill, on the summit of which there are the remains of a fortification of the ancient Britons, and of which I shall have occasion to speak more hereafter. North-east of this hill we have a bird's-eye view of the scenery on Donside, but as this part of the country is better seen from another peak, I shall not at present make any remarks upon it. Having satisfied ourselves with the beauties which presented themselves to our observation, we began the descent in a north-

west direction, in order to reach the Burn of Corrichie at that part where the spring known by the name of Queen Mary's Well arises. After a pretty long, though by no means fatiguing, walk, we at last reached this place, and a more secluded and lovely spot could not be wished for. True, there is no wood about it, but I question much whether trees would add to its beauty. Its character is that of wild, solitary, and independent loveliness. When you reach it all that the eye can look upon is large masses of primary rock, the brown heath of the mountain, and the falling waters; for on every side you are surrounded by one or other of those objects, and no traces of cultivation are to be seen. You are isolated, as it were, from civilisation, and find yourself encompassed with nature in its wildest grandeur. The quiet of the place is only broken by the noise of the waterfall, and with this exception, nothing disturbs the deep and everlasting silence—no sound breaks on the solitude to startle you from the contemplation which it is impossible not to indulge in.

Somewhat warmed by our walk, and our appetites sharpened by the pure air of the mountain, we laid ourselves down on natural sofas, formed out of the solid granite, and spread out our provisions, having first put the well in such a condition as that we could procure water from it. This, by the bye, is no easy matter. It flows in very small quantities, and issues from a fissure in the rock, so that we had to take some clay and fix a small piece of the bark of a tree which we found lying beside it into the aperture, down which the water then flowed into the vessel which we had brought with us. Dr. Ogilvie, in his report of the parish of Midmar to Sir John Sinclair, has the following observations on some of the springs which are to be found in the Hill of Fare, all of which I conceive to be applicable to Queen Mary's Well:—"Several chalybeate springs are found here, which, in scrophulous and scorbutic habits, have been found highly beneficial. These springs are distinguished at the fountain head from the common element by a brown, viscous substance either adhering to the edge of the rill or floating on its surface.

They may be traced at a considerable distance from their sources by the brown tincture of their channels, and of the earth on each side of it. The water takes a blue cast upon mixing spirits with it, and is rendered black by a small infusion of strong tea, as is the case with the well-known medical spring of Peterhead”.

Having satisfied our stomachs, and drunk pretty extensively of the waters of this delightful spring, mixing it with something stronger, solely for the purpose of observing the “blue cast” which it takes on spirits being added, we lighted our cigars, and lay down to rest ourselves. But here I must for the present conclude.

I concluded the first part of this sketch when I had brought my readers to Queen Mary’s Well, and from this point I shall now endeavour to carry their attention to other objects, which I hope they will find worthy of some portion of their regard, however feebly I may be able to conduct them, or to sketch the pictures and the scenes which this hill presents to the observation.

The name attached to the spring from which my friend and I had quenched our thirst, recalled to our recollection the misfortunes of Mary Stuart, and we went over the history of her sorrows from the cradle to the scaffold. Sufferings like hers, whatever were her failings, cannot but find sympathy in every bosom, and everything with which her name is associated must interest the mind, and call into action its powers of reflection. How many sad feelings does the contemplation of the chequered life of this unfortunate Queen force upon us, and on such a spot and surrounded with objects deriving their names from her, they forced themselves upon us with a power which could not be resisted, and made us feel deeply that our calculations in relation to happiness are seldom built on a solid foundation. The splendid pictures which the imagination portrays, when touched by the finger of misfortune, are soon annihilated, and hope alone can uphold us amidst our sufferings, and enable us to endure what cannot be averted.

I may here mention, that on the east side of the Berryhill, and betwixt it and the Tap o' Fare, there is an excavation in the side of a rock, whether natural or artificial I know not, which is called the "Queen's Chair". Here Mary is said to have sat to view the scene of the recent engagement in Corrichie, on her way southward from Aberdeen. There is no authority for this assertion, that I am aware of, more than there is for her having drank at the well which bears her name, nor do I think that she could have visited the hill at all, as it was far from the direction of the route she pursued. If the Queen's Chair is the work of Nature, she has certainly great credit by the operation, as it is impossible to conceive anything more perfect in its resemblance to the high-backed arm-chairs of our forefathers.

Leaving behind us the Queen's Well, we now pursued our way towards the How of Corrichie. As I have before observed, the How is a sort of amphitheatre, surrounded on every side by different peaks of the mountain, and situated in its centre. On the south side of the plain, flows the burn of Corrichie, rising in that part of the mountain called Blackyduds [1422 feet], and almost due west from the field of battle. The little rill called the "Burn of Corse" runs along the east side of the position, joining the burn of Corrichie, and forming with it a right angle.

The battlefield is bounded on the east by the Hill of Corse and the sloping ridge of the Tap o' Fare; on the south, by the Brown-hill, the peak called the Skares, and the rugged hill of Craigarth; on the west, by part of Craigarth and Blackyduds; and on the north, by part of Blackyduds, the Hill of Corse, and Craigmore. I may mention, that the whole ground of what is termed the plain, has a slight inclination towards the burn of Corrichie, and that there is no part of it, speaking properly, perfectly level. Near the burn the ground is marshy, and it is only a narrow stripe running along the foot of the hill, on the north side of the How, which can be said to afford solid footing.

The scene of the battle is easily distinguished from the

great number of tumuli or cairns, and even the direction of the front may, I think, be ascertained by the line which they form, if we can suppose that the killed were buried where they fell, which, I believe, is generally the case. If this supposition be allowed, then, I think, I am justified in fixing the line of front as extending in the direction from the centre of north-west and south-east or nearly so. There are also on the field, and on the sloping side of the hill to the south, several patches of ground of a circular form enclosed with stones. For what purpose they were constructed I do not pretend to know. The battle was fought on the 28th October, 1562, between the Earl of Huntly and his sons, Sir John and Adam Gordon, with their followers, on the one side, and the Earl of Murray, as Lieutenant for the Queen, with an army of upwards of 2000 men, on the other. Murray had with him the Earls of Athole and Morton, and many other persons of distinction.

The object which Huntly had in view was to force himself into the presence of the Queen, that he might plead his own cause, and defend himself against the insidious policy of his rival and enemy Murray. The Queen, prejudiced against Huntly, and trusting to the reports of her brother, believed that Huntly had a design against herself, and sent Murray to disperse his followers, and to bring him before her as a prisoner. The odds were fearfully against Huntly, who had only with him a few of his own friends and dependents, hastily collected and ill armed, while Murray had four times the number of men, well officered, armed, and provided for. Chalmers the historian writes in regard to this transaction as follows:—
“Huntly came forward to Corrichie with 500 new raised men, some of whom daily deserted him, in order to force his way to the Queen’s presence, like Essex, at a subsequent day, when he attempted to gain access by forcible means. He had at length taken his ground, and by doing so had fallen into the snare which had been laid for him by so many artifices”. This last sentence alludes to Huntly’s long forbearance under the many wrongs which he endured

from Murray. "Murray, as the Queen's Lieutenant, now marched out from Aberdeen with 2000 men to surround the victim of his policy. Huntly had taken his position on a hill of difficult access, but he was driven from it by the harquebussers into a narrow morass below; and he was here obliged to surrender with his two sons, Sir John, and Adam, a boy of seventeen, after a very slight resistance".

Chalmers here states that Huntly's position was on a hill of difficult access, and that he was driven from it by Murray's harquebussers, but other historians say that Murray, seeing the advantages of his adversary's position, feigned a retreat, and, being pursued, made a successful stand at another place. To this last account, I confess, I am inclined to adhere after an examination of the localities, more particularly as what Chalmers afterwards says, viz.: "that Huntly was driven into a morass", is in perfect keeping with the straggling tumuli which can easily be traced down to a morass, on the side of the burn of Corrichie from this, which I shall call the second position.

Huntly's position, at the commencement of the affair, taking the line of tumuli for my guide, must, I think, have been on the sloping side of the hill on the north of the How, and, if I am right in this conjecture, then no morass was in Huntly's rear, and before he could have got into one he must have cut his way through Murray's troops, which, I conceive, he was not likely to have done. Nor can any part of the How be called a narrow morass. What I suppose to have been Huntly's first position is a commanding spot, agreeing perfectly with Chalmers' account that it was difficult of access, for it could not have been easily attacked by cavalry, as it is rocky in front, and they must have had, too, the additional disadvantage of charging up hill. Besides, the solid ground was too narrow in front of Huntly's position, I conceive, to have afforded space for forming horses, or to give room for a charge, had Murray been able to form them..

Everything considered, I am inclined to conclude, that on the slope of the hill, on the north side of the How, Huntly had placed his followers, and that here the battle

began, but that Murray finding the position of his adversary too strong to be easily carried, feigned a retreat, as some historians say was the case, and took post on the sloping side of the Hill of Fare, nearly due east from the spot where the engagement began. Here Murray had all the advantages which Huntly possessed at first, while his cavalry had firm footing and sufficient space to charge. In this conjecture I am again borne out by the tumuli which point out the line of front of the opposing parties, which I conceive to have been east and west, exactly such a front as must have been assumed if the retreat took place as I have stated. The number of tumuli at this second position is certainly not so great as at the first, but what Chalmers says may account for this, as the harquebussers, in their attempt to dislodge Huntly, in all probability must have killed a considerable number of men, whereas, at the second position, Murray's cavalry, taking advantage of the disorder—necessarily consequent on the pursuit—amongst Huntly's followers, might have decided the day without very much slaughter. On this spot, then, I conceive the battle to have been decided, and by following the tumuli we can trace the route of the discomfited army. This I conceive to have been in a southerly direction, along the brow of the hill, towards the burn of Corrichie, which would have led them, as Chalmers says, into a narrow morass before reaching the burn. In this morass, where there are a considerable number of tumuli, I am of opinion that the loyal but much injured Huntly, with his gallant sons, must have been taken prisoners, and that here the battle must have finally ended. Randolph, in his letters to his own Court, stated that the number of slain was about 120—all upon the side of Huntly, and that Murray suffered no loss in killed, although many were wounded, and a number of horses killed. This I take to be a fabrication of the English Ambassador, as, it is incredible that Huntly's followers had fought so like children as Randolph would have it appear.

Huntly did not long survive his defeat, for he was scarcely mounted on a horse when he fell backward and

expired of a broken heart. It would be impossible to excuse his taking up arms against the Queen, but the question is, were his intentions directed against her, or were they not rather directed against the grasping and insidious Murray? He wished to clear himself from the charges brought against him by his rival, and to plead his own cause, and defend his loyalty before the Queen. Poor Mary lived to regret what she had allowed to be done to Huntly, and to curse the man whom she had exalted on his ruin. Sir John Gordon was beheaded, and Adam was suffered to live, in consideration of his youth, and afterwards became a distinguished leader in the Queen's army when Murray had proved himself a traitor.

Amidst the tumuli at the first position one is conspicuous over the others from its size, which I suppose to be the grave of one of the chief men of Huntly's party, if it is at all connected with the battle. I am of opinion, however, that it is of much older date, and that it is a Celtic grave.

We now began to ascend the ridge called Craigmore, lying betwixt the vale of Corrichie and Midmar. This is rather a steep climb, but the prospect you have from the top of the peak rewards you amply for the labour. In a sort of bay, if I may be allowed the expression, penetrating far into the mountain, and considerably elevated above the adjoining country, stands Midmar Castle. From the spot we stood on, this old mansion appeared immediately at our feet, surrounded by considerable elevations, except in the front, where the ground slopes gradually towards the level country. The lower parts of the Castle are not seen from this place, but the turrets rise beautifully above the trees. The view of Midmar Castle from this spot is sufficient of itself to repay the lovers of the beautiful for the fatigue of a journey to the Hill of Fare, although there were no other objects worthy of their notice. But the view is not confined to this one object. The prospect from this point is extensive and beautiful in a very high degree. The valley of the Don lies stretched out before you, and the river itself peeping out here and there from amongst the

trees on its banks, or from behind some elevated ground, adds very much to the effect of the picture which is stretched out before you.

On the level ground below Midmar Castle, but a little to the east, there is an artificial mound of considerable magnitude, which I believe forms part of the glebe of the clergyman of Midmar. "It is obviously", says Sir John Sinclair, "a work of art. A ditch or trench that is cast round, it is now covered with grass, from the bottom of which trench to the summit the perpendicular height is about thirty feet. The acclivity is gentle at the entrance, but steep in every other part. The middle part of the summit contains a cavity, with a small circular rising in its centre. Here, tradition reports, criminals were tried and justice administered".

Should this be a moot hill, then it is different in one feature from any I have seen, viz. the trench which is around it, for I do not recollect seeing one of those seats which had any sort of defence similar to this, and I am much inclined to doubt that it was ever used for the purpose of a judgment seat, while at the same time it is too small in its dimensions to have been a place of defence. From Craigmore it is but a short walk to the Barmekin on the top of which, as I before mentioned, are the remains of a fortification of the ancient Britons, and although this, properly speaking, is no part of the Hill of Fare, yet, as it is one of the most conspicuous objects, from several parts of it I shall quote the observations made on it in the Statistical Account:—"On the summit of the hill the remains of two dry stone walls, and of three ditches, are distinctly visible. The walls and the ditches are all circular. The inner appears to have been about twelve feet thick, the outer only five or six. The circumference of the inner wall is about 330 yards, that of the outer ditch about 560. The distance between the inner wall and the inner ditch is about 16 yards, between the inner wall and the outer ditch, about 36. There are five different entrances into the area, inclosed within the inner wall—one in the east, one in the south, one in the south-west, one in the

west, and one in the north. All the entrances are in an oblique direction. The outer wall is said to be more modern than the inner, and to have been built of stones taken from the inner wall, as a fence for trees". In this last conclusion I agree, as the outer wall is evidently more modern than the inner. I forgot to mention in its place that the Hill of Noth is seen distinctly from Craigmore, as well as Bennachie—thus we have at once before us the sites of three of the fortifications of the ancient Britons, and all equally remarkable.

We returned to my friend's house late in the evening, highly gratified with our excursion, and delighted with the objects we had seen on and from the Hill of Fare, as I am sure everyone must be who takes the trouble of visiting them. Our appetites were magnificent and having done the amplest justice to the viands, the grog soon did its work on us, as it was plentifully supplied, and observing my friend's eye to have a twinkling motion, and that his face looked extremely knowing, we retired to rest, to visit again, in sleep, the delightful Hill of Fare.

Appeared in the *Aberdeen Observer*, 26th July and 9th August, 1833, as Nos. II. and III. respectively of "Topographical Sketches", signed "Menenius". From a letter which we have seen from the Editor of the *Observer* (Mr. William Duncan) to Baillie Bothwell, along with copies of these sketches in page form, it might be inferred that the writer "Menenius" was Alexander Torrie, advocate; but in article No. V., by "Peter Peebles, Burgess, Aberdonensis" [Joseph Robertson], a John Mennie is mentioned as the writer—but in such a bantering style that we are no more sure of him than of "James Brown" of *Deeside Guide* fame, also mentioned as a writer.—ED., C.C.J.