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A *P. 2. 5.*  
**DESCRIPTION**  
 OF THE  
**Western Islands**  
*Summits* OF ~~History~~  
**SCOTLAND.**  
 CONTAINING *Travels*

A Full Account of their Situation, Extent, Soils, Product, Harbours, Bays, Tides, Anchoring-Places, and Fisheries.

The Antient and Modern Government, Religion and Customs of the Inhabitants; particularly of their Druids, Heathen Temples, Monasteries, Churches, Chappels, Antiquities, Monuments, Forts, Caves, and other Curiosities of Art and Nature: Of their Admirable and Expeditious Way of Curing most Diseases by Simples of their own Product.

A Particular Account of the *Second Sight*, or Faculty of foreseeing things to come, by way of Vision, so common among them.

A Brief Hint of Methods to improve Trade in that Country, both by Sea and Land.

With a New MAP of the Whole, describing the Harbours, Anchoring-Places, and dangerous Rocks, for the benefit of Sailors.

To which is added, A Brief Description of the Isles of *Orkney* and *Schetland*.

By *M. MARTIN*, Gent.

The SECOND EDITION, very much Corrected.

L O N D O N,

Printed for A. BELL at the Cross-Keys and Bible in *Cornhill*; T. VARNAM and J. OSBORN in *Lombard-street*; W. TAYLOR at the Ship, and J. BAKER and T. WARNER at the Black Boy in *Pateroster-Row*. M. DCC. XVI.

( iii )

To His Royal Highness Prince  
*G E O R G E* of *Denmark*,  
Lord High Admiral of *Eng-  
land* and *Ireland*, and of all  
Her Majesty's Plantations,  
and Generalissimo of all Her  
Majesty's Forces, &c.

May it please Your Royal Highness,

**A**MONGST the Numerous Croud of  
Congratulating Addressers, the Islan-  
ders described in the following Sheets  
presume to approach Your Royal Person : They  
can now, without suspicion of Infidelity to the  
Queen



## iv DEDICATION.

*Queen of England, pay their Duty to a Danish Prince, to whose Predecessors all of them formerly belonged.*

*THEY can boast that they are honoured with the Sepulchres of eight Kings of Norway, who at this day, with forty eight Kings of Scotland, and four of Ireland, lie entomb'd in the Island of Jona; a Place fam'd then for some peculiar Sanctity.*

*THEY presume that it is owing to their great distance from the Imperial Seat, rather than their want of Native Worth, that their Islands have been so little regarded; which by Improvement might render a considerable Accession of Strength and Riches to the Crown, as appears by a Scheme annexed to the following Treatise. They have suffer'd hitherto under the want of a powerful and affectionate Patron; Providence seems to have given them a Natural Claim to Your Royal Highness: And tho' it be almost Presumption for so sinful a Nation to hope for so great a Blessing, they do humbly join their Prayers to God, that*  
the

## DEDICATION. v

*the Protection which they hope for from two Princes of so much native Worth and Goodness, might be continu'd in Your Royal Posterity to all Generations. So prays,*

May it please Your Royal Highness,

Your Highness's most Humble

and most Obedient Servant,

M. MARTIN.

THE  
P R E F A C E

**T**HE Western Islands of *Scotland*, which make the Subject of the following Book, were call'd by the antient Geographers *Æbuda*, and *Hebrides*; but they knew so little of them, that they neither agreed in their Name nor Number. Perhaps it is peculiar to those Isles, that they have never been describ'd till now, by any Man that was a Native of the Country, or had travel'd them. They were indeed touch'd by *Boethius*, Bishop *Lefly*, *Buchanan*, and *Johnston*, in their Histories of *Scotland*; but none of those Authors were ever there in Person: so that what they wrote concerning 'em, was upon trust from others. *Buchanan*, it is true, had his Information from *Donald Monro*, who had been in many

many of 'em; and therefore his Account is the best that has hitherto appear'd, but it must be own'd that it is very imperfect: that Great Man design'd the History, and not the Geography of his Country, and therefore in him it was pardonable. Besides, since his time there's a great Change in the Humour of the World, and by consequence in the way of Writing. Natural and Experimental Philosophy has been much improv'd since his days; and therefore Descriptions of Countries, without the Natural History of 'em, are now justly reckon'd to be defective.

THIS I had a particular regard to, in the following Description, and have every where taken notice of the Nature of the Climate and Soil, of the Produce of the Places by Sea and Land, and of the remarkable Cures perform'd by the Natives merely by the Use of Simples; and that in such variety, as I hope will make amends for what Defects may be found in my Stile and Way of Writing: for there's a Wantonness in Language as well

well as in other things, to which my Countrymen of the Isles are as much strangers, as to other Excesses which are too frequent in many parts of *Europe*. We study Things there more than Words, tho' those that understand our Native Language must own, that we have enough of the latter to inform the Judgment, and work upon the Affections in as pathetick a manner as any other Languages whatever. But I go on to my Subject.

THE Isles here describ'd are but little known or consider'd, not only by Strangers, but even by those under the same Government and Climate.

THE modern Itch after the Knowledge of foreign Places is so prevalent, that the generality of Mankind bestow little Thought or Time upon the Place of their Nativity. It is become customary in those of Quality to travel young into foreign Countries, whilst they are absolute Strangers at home; and many of them, when they return, are only loaded with super-

superficial Knowledge; as the bare Names of famous Libraries, stately Edifices, fine Statues, curious Paintings, late Fashions, new Dishes, new Tunes, new Dances, painted Beauties, and the like.

THE Places here mention'd afford no such Entertainment; the Inhabitants in general prefer Conveniency to Ornament both in their Houses and Apparel, and they rather satisfy than oppress Nature in their way of eating and drinking; and not a few among them have a natural Beauty, which excels any that has been drawn by the finest *Apelles*.

THE Land, and the Sea that encompass it, produce many things useful and curious in their kind, several of which have not hitherto been mention'd by the Learned. This may afford the Theorist Subject of Contemplation, since every Plant of the Field, every Fiber of each Plant, and the least Particle of the smallest Insect, carries with it the Impress of its Maker; and if rightly consider'd, may

may read us Lectures of Divinity and Morals.

THE Inhabitants of these Islands do for the most part labour under the want of Knowledg of Letters, and other useful Arts and Sciences; notwithstanding which Defect, they seem to be better vers'd in the Book of Nature, than many that have greater Opportunities of Improvement. This will appear plain and evident to the judicious Reader, upon a View of the successful Practice of the Islanders in the Preservation of their Health, above what the Generality of Mankind enjoys; and this is perform'd merely by Temperance, and the prudent use of Simples; which, as we are assur'd by repeated Experiments, fail not to remove the most stubborn Distempers, where the best prepar'd Medicines have frequently no Success. This I relate not only from the Authority of many of the Inhabitants, who are Persons of great Integrity, but likewise from my own particular Observation. And thus with *Celsus*,  
they

they first make Experiments, and afterwards proceed to reason upon the Effects.

HUMAN Industry has of late advanc'd useful and experimental Philosophy very much; Women and illiterate Persons have in some measure contributed to it, by the Discovery of some useful Cures. The Field of Nature is large, and much of it wants still to be cultivated by an ingenious and discreet Application; and the Curious, by their Observations, might daily make further Advances in the History of Nature.

SELF-PRESERVATION is natural to every living Creature: and thus we see the several Animals of the Sea and the Land so careful of themselves, as to observe nicely what is agreeable, and what is hurtful to them; and accordingly they chuse the one, and reject the other.

THE Husbandman and the Fisher could expect but little Success without Observation in their several Employments;

ments; and it is by Observation that the Physician commonly judges of the Condition of his Patient. A Man of Observation proves often a Physician to himself; for it was by this that our Ancestors preserv'd their Health till a good old Age, and that Mankind laid up that Stock of natural Knowledg, of which they are now possess'd.

THE Wise *Solomon* did not think it beneath him to write of the meanest Plant, as well as of the tallest Cedar. *Hippocrates* was at the Pains and Charge to travel foreign Countries, with a design to learn the Virtues of Plants, Roots, &c. I have in my little Travels endeavour'd, among other things, in some measure to imitate so great a Pattern: and if I have been so happy as to oblige the Republick of Learning with any thing that is useful, I have my Design. I hold it enough for me to furnish my Observations, without accounting for the Reason and Way that those Simples produce them: this I leave to the Learned in that Faculty; and if they

they would oblige the World with such Theorems from these and the like Experiments, as might serve for Rules upon Occasions of this nature, it would be of great advantage to the Publick.

AS for the Improvement of the Isles in general, it depends upon the Government of *Scotland*, to give Encouragement for it to such publick-spirited Persons or Societies as are willing to lay out their Endeavours that way: and how large a Field they have to work upon, will appear by taking a Survey of each, and of the Method of Improvement that I have hereunto subjoin'd.

THERE is such an Account given here of the *Second Sight*, as the Nature of the thing will bear. This has always been reckon'd sufficient among the unbiass'd part of Mankind; but for those that will not be so satisfy'd, they ought to oblige us with a new Scheme, by which we may judg of Matters of Fact.

THERE

THERE are several Instances of Heathenism and Pagan Superstition among the Inhabitants of the Islands, related here: but I would not have the Reader to think those Practices are chargeable upon the generality of the present Inhabitants; since only a few of the oldest and most ignorant of the Vulgar are guilty of 'em. These Practices are only to be found where the Reform'd Religion has not prevail'd; for 'tis to the Progress of that alone, that the Banishment of evil Spirits, as well as of evil Customs, is owing, when all other Methods prov'd ineffectual. And for the Islanders in general, I may truly say, that in Religion and Virtue they excel many thousands of others, who have greater Advantages of daily Improvement.

THE

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THE  
CONTENTS.

<b>T</b> HE Isle of Lewis, its different Names, Shire, and Diocess, Air-Corrective, Soil, Clay, Vessels, Fruitfulness, Corn; Ground how manur'd; Soot produces the Jaundice; Effects of Ground when first tilled.	page 1, 2
Industry of the Inhabitants, way of digging; a strange Harrow, how used; Trestarig and Usquebaugh-baul how made, and their Effects.	3
An Account of the Bays and Harbours, Fish; Gallan Whale destroys three Men; young Whales how kill'd, they are nourishing Food.	4, 5
Whales call'd Sea-Pork, the larger more loosening; various kind of Shell-fish, how they corrupt the Air, and the time; Coral; Trouts and Eels, their Bait.	6
The Custom of crossing Barvas-River, by a Male, and not a Female, the first Day of May; Springs and Fountains, their Qualities; a superstitious Experiment about the Water.	7
Caves, Natural and Artificial Forts, their Form; Thrussel-Stone.	8
A Heathen Temple, its Figure, &c.	9
Forest, Deer and Cattle, how fed in time of a Storm; old Roots of Trees.	10
	A



*A Bush of Wood ; State of Health, and Constitution of the Inhabitants ; their Diseases, various Cures.* 11, 12

*A Preternatural Birth, Ingenuity of the Natives, Love of Musick, their Exercises, Fatigue : Inferior Isles, their Description ; a stone Dyke lately discover'd in the Sea.* 13, 14, 15

*Flannan-Isles, their Product ; superstitious Custom of sailing, fowling, &c. used by the Inhabitants.* 16, 17, 18

*Pigmies or Lusbird. The Isle Rona, its Extent, Product, Inhabitants, their Devotions, Way of Living, Customs. Mr. Morison's Reception, Homage ; a Present given him and his Man ; he is seen after the manner of the Second Sight. The Inhabitants how they all perish'd. Colk a rare Fowl ; a new Colony, &c.* 19—25

*Siant-Isle ; Eagles, their Policy ; Blue Stone ; Eoropy-Point. The Isles above make two Parishes ; Churches, their Names and Number.* 26, 27

*Antient Natives say their Pater-Noster at first view of a Church : Sacrifice offer'd to a Sea-God, and how.* 28

*Inhabitants, their Religion ; an Experiment of Holy Water, Festivals ; Stornvay Village, Proprietor.* 29, 30

*Harries, Extent, Soil, Air how qualify'd ; Harbours, fresh Lakes, Springs, their various Qualities ; Caves, Forts, Stones on end.* 31—34

*Number of Deer, &c. Mertrick, its Fur, &c. Two sorts of Eagles.* 35, 36

*A Viper, Rats how destroy'd, a stone Circle in the Sea, various Shells, Os Capixæ how used, Molucca Beans, Amulets, Ambergreese.* 37, 38

*Hearing lost how restor'd ; Blindness in Sheep how restor'd ; a Foal with cloven Feet ; Carrot-Seed instead of Hops.* 39, 40

*A singular Cure for a Cold ; a Worm how taken out of one's Cheek ; Allium, how successful against the Stone ; Lunar Stone.* 41

*A Man lost his Sight at the Moon's Change ; great Product of Barley ; Sea-ware enriches the Ground ; a Substance like Stake grows in the ground.* 42, 43

*Several Irregularities in the Tides ; two Ravens ; Stones erected.* 44—47

*Pabbay-Isle, Tokens of Wood gain'd by the Sea ; a Fat-Pudding calms the Sea, and attracts the Whales ; Sheep with big Horns.* 48

*Two Chappels ; a Tradition there proves false ; a secret Sign among the Inhabitants of Taransay ; big Seals in Gasker-Isle ; a Pair of Seals, and Hammer dug out of a Grave in the Sands ; a Vein of Adamant in Quedam-Isle, no Mice can live in it.* 49, 50

*Hermetra-Isle hath the Foundation of a Magazine, used when the Fishery was there ; the rocky Channel between the Isle of Vift and Harries navigable ; Festivals ; Cavalcade.* 51, 52

*The Isle North-Vift, its Figure, Soil, great Produce, Corn, two Ploughs, Bays, four hundred Sail loaded with Herring in 'em ; a Magazine-House for the great Fishery, Shell-fish.* 53, 54, 55

*Mackrel run ashore with Spring-Tides, and how they are preserv'd; a strange way of thickning Cloth; a vast number of fresh Lakes, they abound with Eels and Trouts.* 56, 57

*Cod, Ling, Mackrel, &c. Fish caught in Lakes; a marled Salmon describ'd; Shell-Fish; antient Forts, Cairns of Stone.* 58

*False Centinels, several Stones on end; a Stone on end, to which Malefactors were ty'd at Divine Service; the Water-Cross.* 59

*Several sorts of Fewel; Cheese salted with Ashes of Barley-straw; an earthen Pitcher full of Bones; the Policy of Ravens, &c. Seals how taken with Nets; the yearly Attack on Seals in Cousmil-Rock; Seals, their Naturality, &c.* 61, 62, 63

*Seals how eat, how preserv'd, how used against Diarrhea and Dyfenteria; Seals used against the Chin-cough, its way of leaping, the Skin how used, Hams made of Seals; a Dispute whether a Seal be Fish or Flesh.* 64, 65

*Heisker-Rocks.* 66

*The Isle Borera; a Mare brings forth a Foal in her second Year; fine Dulse, Monks Field, Grave-stones; Tradition of Monks Posture in time of Prayer.* 68

*Lingay-Isle its Produce, it has been esteem'd sacred; Beef salted in the Cows Hide; Cows fatned by Sea-ware.* 69

*Deer feed on Sea-ware; Eagle how it fishes; Fowl of Sea and Land; black Eagle destroys Lamb, Deer, and Fawn; a Vow at the eating of a Swan; the Colk describ'd; the Gowlin prognosticates fair Weather.* 70, 71

The

*The Gowlin's Notes play'd on the Pipe; the Rain-Geese foretell Rain; the Bishop-Fowl cures the Sciatica; the Bird Goylir foretells a Storm.* 72

*The Bird Screachanattin, its Affection to its Mate. Observation of Eggs. Wild-Geese.* 73

*Barren Fowl. Air, its Properties. Snow, its time. Observations of Frost and Rain. Observation of the North-East Winds. Diseases, Cures.* 74, 75

*A Native call'd the Rain-Almanack. A House in which a Cock doth not crow from September till March. Longevity of the Natives, their Charity. An Inn a great Rarity. Custom of asking Grain, Cows, &c. gratis.* 76, 77, 78

*The Anniversary Cavalcade. A Custom tolerated the night before the Cavalcade. How they run for a Prize; Bridles, Whips how made. Mutual Presents. Proprietor, Religion.* 78, 79, 80

*Benbecula-Isle, a Harbour, Soil. A Vault having many small Bones in it, Opinion concerning them; Proprietor. A Lay-Capuchin, his Habit, &c.* 82, 83

*The Isle South-Vist, Soil, Corn, fresh Lakes, old Forts; Ambergeese found here. Frost kills Fish. Inhabitants, Diet, Habit. A Native 130 Years old; stone Kairns; Superstition of the Natives.* 84, 85, 86

*Eriska-Isle, Anchorage, Fishings, the Ground casts up Heath. A Caution to Travellers by Land. Vipers of late discover'd.* 87

*Inhabitants, their Language, Dress, Hospitality, their Alliances with Protestants; Churches, Bowing-stone;*



stone; a Buckle of Gold; Proprietor, Cavalcade, St. Michael's Cake. Manuscripts in the Irish Character and Language.	88, 89
The Isle of Barray, its Length, Situation, Produce, Corn.	ibid.
Plenty of Fish, small Ships from Orkney for Fish; a Harbour; speckled Salmon, and how taken, &c.	90
Fort, Orchard, Tobacco growing there. Kismal the Heretor's Seat, a Tower, Magazine.	ibid.
The Officers, Cockman, Constable. The Properties of several Wells. Embrios of Cockles; Chappel. St. Barr's Image, the Inhabitants pay religious Worship to it; Tradition concerning St. Barr.	91, 92
The more Southern Isles describ'd, their Produce of Fish, Corn, &c. A Stone rubb'd to their Breast, and why.	93, 94
Inhabitants their Hospitality, a singular way of lodging Strangers.	95
An unknown Root. The Isle Linmul. Fowl; Climber Gingick, his Hazard, Reward, &c.	96
Women and Men apply to Mackneil for a Match, and he recommends the Match. St. Christopher's Altar, the Natives perform their Devotion at it. A Tenant's Misfortune supply'd.	97
The Proprietor's Care of his Tenants; Observation of Sheep; Anchorage. The Steward, his Perquisites.	98
Inferior Officers, their Perquisites. Religion; St. Barr, his anniversary Cavalcade; a Priest's Reception, and a Dispute with him concerning St. Barr. Proprietor, his Antiquity, his Vassalage, Tribute, &c.	99, 100 The

The antient and modern Customs of the Inhabitants of the Western Isles of Scotland.	101—123
Courts of Judicatory, offensive and defensive Leagues, the Formality of giving a Farm to a Tenant.	124, 125
Church-Discipline. A Form of Prayer used by the Islanders at Sea.	126—130
The Isle of Skie, its Etymology, Situation, Shire, Diocess, South-East Moon causeth high Tide.	131
Mold, Earths various, their Effects; Marcasites, Aggat, Chrystal, Marble, Limestone, Cornua Ammonis.	132, 133
Velumnities, Stone resembling Goats Horns. Lapis Hecticus, its Qualities.	134
Corkir, Crotil, Talk.	135
Harbours, Mountains.	136—138
The Mountain Quillin the Cause of Rain; Soil very good, from several Instances.	139
Digging yields a better Increase than ploughing; Springs and Fountains, their Qualities. Some are under a Vow of coming to Lochfiant Well; an Offering is left on the Stones above the Well.	140
The Wood near the Well esteemed sacred; a Trout carefully preserv'd. Thirty Rivers afford Salmon; Pearl.	141
Prognostick of Rain; Bait and Season for angling Trout; a fresh Lake, affords Pearl; this Isle antiently cover'd with Wood, some Coppices.	142
Herring in several Bays, all kind of Fish follow them; all Fish have a Leader. A strange Observation of Herring; Herring preserv'd without Salt. All Fish abound on this Coast; the Season for fishing; several sorts of Bait.	143, 144

The Bays, &c. afford various Shell-fish; great plenty of Oysters. Nurses Milk how to increase. Jaundice occasion'd by eating the Patella; Observations of the Patella. 145, 146

Of the Balamos, Periwinkle, Cockles, &c. Observation of Fish. 147

Sea Plants, their Qualities; Sleep to procure; Megrin how cured. Slake its Qualities. 148

Dulse, its Properties; of the Alga Marina. 149

White and red Coral, their Effects; a Cave petrifies Water. 150

Several Caves, Cairns, Stones set on end; the Giant Fin-Mac-Cowl. 151, 152

Danish Forts serve as Beacons, Names of Forts, Houses, Druids Houses, Coal lately found, Cattle, &c. 153, 154

A Cow how impos'd upon by the Skin of her dead Calf, and how pacify'd. Cows how deter'd from any place. Cows distinguish the Tides without sight of the Sea. Cows how they presage their Master's Death. A Native being kill'd, his Cows gave Blood instead of Milk about that very time. 155, 156

A monstrous Calf; a Cow brought forth five Calves all at once. A Calf with double Feet; Calves having the Ear slit. Land and Water-Fowl; the difference betwixt good and bad Cormorants, their Broth restores Milk in Nurses, they foretell the Winds. Observation of the Oil of Land and Sea-Fowl, and of the St. Kilda Fowl. Sea-Pye presages fair Weather. 157, 158

Amphi-

Amphibia; Observation of Otters; various Serpents, how they kill; Cures for the biting of Serpents. 159, 160

Two sort of Weasels, and their Effects. The Peninsula Oronsay excels in Pasturage. 161, 162

The Isle Rafay; a white Substance from petrify'd Water, proves good Lime. A Stone-Quarry. A Law observ'd in fishing. 163

Fort, Proprietor. Pyramids erected for every deceas'd Lady. 164

Hectick Stone reddish. Shoals of Herring. 165

The Isle Fladda frequented by a monstrous Whale. A superstitious Custom for procuring a fair Wind. 166

A Stone much regarded by the Natives. The Monk Ogorgon. The Tour used by Birds and Men round Table-Fort. 167, 168

Scurvy-grass, its Size, Quality. 169

A singular kind of Dulse. The South of Skie earlier in Grass, Cattle, &c. than the North part. 170

Air, Quillin-Mountain call'd an Almanack. Several Observations of Winds. 171, 172

A Presage of fair Weather. Tides, Moon its Influence. 173, 174

The Diseases known and not known in the Isle Skie. The Cures used by the Inhabitants. 175, 176, 177

The Alga Marina useful in planting. Several Cures for Diseases. 178, 179

Land-Plants, their Qualities. 180, 181, 182

<i>Cure for Cough, or Hoarseness; Hætick-stone.</i>	
<i>Water-gruel how us'd.</i>	183
<i>A Smith's Cure for the Faintness of the Spirits.</i>	184
<i>Vulneraries; Purges; a Tumor to ripen; Syroms to take away; Blindness how cured. Asbes of Seaware preserve Cheese.</i>	185, 186
<i>Swell'd Feet; Glysters how made. A Difficulty in easing Nature at Sea, how remov'd.</i>	187, 188
<i>Sweat to procure; the various Effects of Fishes on several Constitutions.</i>	189, 190
<i>A Native hath a Faculty of erecting his Ears.</i>	
<i>A strange Worm in some People.</i>	192
<i>Yeast how preserv'd many Years.</i>	ibid.
<i>Hemlock its Effects; many Worms how destroy'd.</i>	193
<i>The Inhabitants Complexion, Education, great Age, Beds; a larger Dose of Physick requir'd here than in the South.</i>	194, 195, 196
<i>They are easily cured; an Empirick without Letters or Education, his Success.</i>	197, 198
<i>The Natives sagacious, mechanical, Lovers of Musick.</i>	199
<i>Genius for Poetry; Disadvantage and Advantage in the want of Converse.</i>	200
<i>Diet, Men eat more than Women; Oon, a Dish made of Milk or Whey.</i>	201, 202, 203
<i>Graddan, a way of dressing Corn; two yearly Fairs; Cattle how swimm'd over the Ferries.</i>	204
	—208
<i>The Islanders Affection to their Chief.</i>	209
<i>Their way of fighting.</i>	210
	Division

<i>Division of Skie Isle, Proprietors, Religion.</i>	211
<i>Boot-Isle, Mold, Corn, Rosa-Town, Churches; an antient Native, he never can ease Nature at Sea; Language, Industry of the Natives, Fishing, Proprietors.</i>	214, 215, 216
<i>Arran-Isle, its Etymology, Mountains, Bays, Earths, Stones, Rivers, Air.</i>	217, 218
<i>Caves, a Giant's House, Stones on end, Bones found under them, two stone Circles.</i>	219, 220
<i>A Sanctuary, Harbour, Forest, Cattle, Castle of Brodwick.</i>	221, 222
<i>Proprietor, Deputy, Mack-Lewis.</i>	223
<i>Coroner, his Office, &amp;c. Inhabitants, their Complexion, Habit, Language, Churches, Religion; a Stone valu'd by the Inhabitants, &amp;c.</i>	224, 225, 226
<i>Isleay-Isle, a Fort, Produce, Chappels.</i>	227
<i>Gigay-Isle, its Church, the Bowing-stone, Cross, Bleeding how stench'd; Religion, no burying on Friday.</i>	227—230
<i>Jurah-Isle, its Etymology, Paps of Jurah, Sheriffdom, Proprietor.</i>	231, 232
<i>Wholesomness of the Isle, Fountains, their Properties; Longevity of the Natives, Cave, Harbours.</i>	234, 235
<i>Direction for Sailors; Serpents; Cory-Vrekan Gulf.</i>	236, 237
<i>A Vessel escapes narrowly. Rats flee out of the Isle.</i>	238
<i>Religion, they do not bury on Friday; Complexion, Language; a Lead-Mine.</i>	239
	The

## xxvi The Contents.

<i>The Isle of Ila, Finlagan Isle, the Courts antiently, and Seat of Judicature.</i>	240
<i>Coronation-stone, &amp;c. Forts, Caves.</i>	241, 242
<i>Rivers; the Judg how buried.</i>	243
<i>Churches, Air, Proprietor; a new-found Isle, call'd Green Isle.</i>	244, 245
<i>The Isle Collonsay, Church, Monastery, Tombs, Proprietor, Crosses; a Tour made round the Church; Mold, Castle, Complexion, Diet, Language.</i>	246, 247, 248
<i>Religion, Women only observe the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin; stone Chests.</i>	249
<i>Mull-Isle, Air, Carmel-Root Aromatick, it prevents Drunkenness; Mountains.</i>	250, 251
<i>Bays, Forts, Tonbir-Mory Harbour, the Spanish Ship blown up here.</i>	252, 253
<i>Indian Beans how used; a Stone receives no Heat.</i>	254
<i>Jona-Isle, Tradition concerning Columbus; various Names of the Isle, its Length, it was a Seminary of Learning; Revenues. The Bishop of the Isles his Cathedral, he is stiled Episcopus Sodorensis. Vicar of Jona was Parson of Soroby, and Dean of the Isles. St. Mary's Church describ'd.</i>	255, 256, 257
<i>Bishops, Abbots, and others of distinction, bury'd within the Church; Cloyster, Library, a Burying-place for Murderers and Unbaptiz'd Persons. Columbus's Tomb.</i>	258
<i>St. Martin's Cross; Monks-Dun, its use. The Black Stones on which Oaths were sworn; they are call'd the Great Seal.</i>	259
	Taylor's

## The Contents. xxvii

<i>Taylor's House. St. Ouran's Church, several Persons of Distinction bury'd in it; their Statues.</i>	260
<i>The Burial-place of the Kings of Scotland, Ireland, and Norway; as also of the antient Families in the Isles; of an English Bishop: several Inscriptions. Ronad's Church, wherein the Prioresses are bury'd.</i>	261, 262
<i>Inscriptions, Nunnery, two Pavements, Macklean's Cross; Columbus carry'd eighteen Clergymen to Jona; variegated Stones, how used. A Tradition of the Family of Porters.</i>	263
<i>Columbus, his Life in divers hands; he excluded Women from the Isle.</i>	264
<i>Cattle excluded, only to be free from Women. Beda his Account of Columbus.</i>	265, 266
<i>The Isle of Tire-iy; Experiments to revive Ale; Yeast how preserv'd.</i>	267, 268
<i>Cows-Milk produc'd by Sea-ware; many Whales eat by the Natives. The Isle subject to the Ague; some of the Inhabitants bald; a Cave.</i>	269
<i>Fortes, Circles of Stone, Inhabitants, their Religion.</i>	270
<i>The Isle of Coll, it produces more Boys than Girls, and Tire-iy more Girls than Boys; the former feed on Oat-Bread, the latter on Barley. A Native aged 89; dangerous Rocks.</i>	271
<i>The Isle Rum, mountainous and heathy; its Length, Rivers, Fowl, Caves, Colour of the Rocks, Deer, a superstitious Observation.</i>	273
<i>Chappel, Proprietor, Language, Habit.</i>	274
<i>The Isle Muck, Fruitfulness, Cattle, Fowl, Language, Hawks.</i>	ibid.
	The

*The Isle Cannay, fruitful in Corn and Grass, plenty of Fish; a Loadstone in the North end. The Isle call'd Tarfin at Sea. Columbus's Church. Religion, Habit, Proprietor, Anchorage.* 275

*The Isle of Egg, rocky and mountainous; a natural Fort, a Harbour, a large Cave, a Well reputed medicinal, the Effect it hath on a Stranger that lies at it in the night-time. The Natives make a Round about a Heap of Stone. A Heap of Stone consecrated to the Virgin Mary. A Well consecrated by a Popish Priest, much esteem'd by the Inhabitants. The Ceremony at the Consecration.* 276, 277

*St. Catherine's Anniversary; the Inhabitants well proportion'd, Language, Habit, Religion. St. Donnan's Church and Anniversary. A Sepulchral Urn, a Passage under ground. Protestants deny'd access to the Burials in this Isle.* 278, 279

*St. Kilda or Hirta, Etymology of the Name, its Distance, in a Dutch Map it is call'd Kilder; its Length, Fountains, Cattle low of Stature, Sheep have big Horns.* 280

*The Fort of the Volscii.* 281

*A barren Tribe of Solan Geese; a Pudding made of their Fat, and its Effect.* 282

*Solan Goose-Egg pectoral, their Nests how made; a red Coat, Sun-dial, Arrow, and Molucca-Beans found in one of their Nests. The Fowl call'd Fulmar, its Size, it prognosticates the West Wind, it feeds on live Whale, eats Sorrel, it spouts out pure Oil at its Bill, Properties of this Oil. Number of the Inhabitants, Language, Habit, they are all not subject to many Diseases; the Men very strong.*  
Strangers

*Strangers infect the Natives with a Cough.* 283, 284

*Diet of the Natives, it causes a Leprosy. They have a Genius for Poesy; they escape narrowly by climbing; the Ingenuity of one among them.* 285

*A significative Sign, understood at a distance by all the Women. The Women labour the Ground one Year.* 286, 287

*They swear decisive Oaths by the Crucifix, and it is of Brass. The Impostor his Deceit, how he was taken out of the Isle, his Confession and Repentance, &c.* 288

*St. Kilda-Man's Notion of the City of Glasgow, and of every Object he saw in it. Proprietor, Steward, Product.* 289, 290

*Steward's Deputy, Omer and Cubit, no Silver or Gold used here, they fight for Property, they live contentedly, nice in Property.* 291

*Stout Rowers, no Compass, Pot-Penny, Fire-Penny, the Fire-Penny lost by the Discovery of Chrystal.* 292

*They excel in climbing. Two Ropes belonging to the Commonwealth. Great Purchase of Fowl; Eggs, two thousand caught in a day's time; Gins wherein Fowl are caught. One of the Natives escapes narrowly. They perish in climbing. Lamentation-Songs.* 293, 294

*Rock-Fowl how a Present; Horses, Fewel, Cavalcade, fine Hawks. One of the Inhabitants travels to Glasgow, his strange Idea of every Object there.* 295

*A Child taken away by an Eagle, and preserv'd.* 299  
An



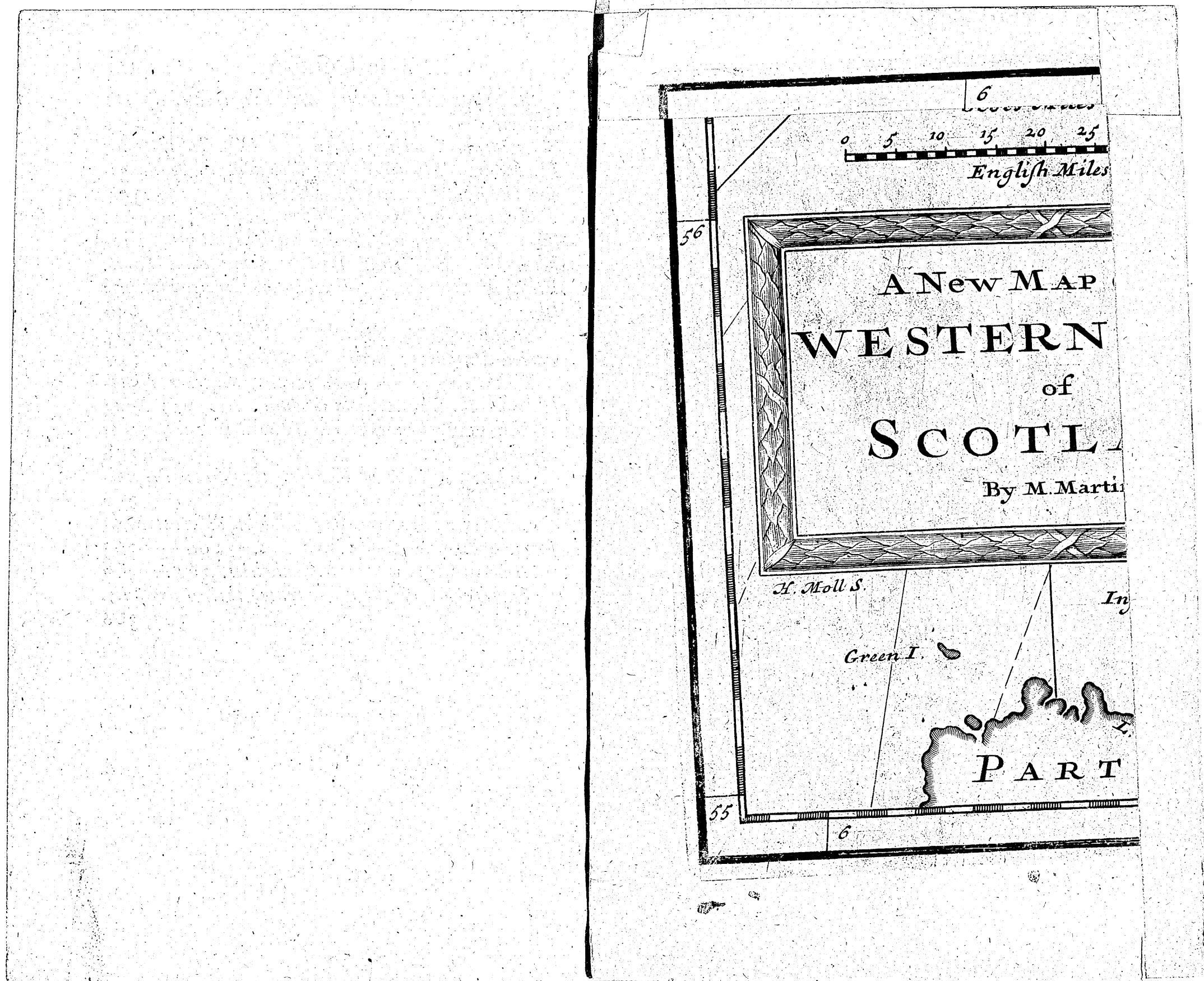
## xxx The Contents.

- An Account of the Second Sight, or Faculty of foreseeing things to come, by way of Vision; several Instances of it narrated.* 300
- A Scheme of Trade, particularly of Fishing.* 336
- The Language of the Inhabitants, and their Remoteness, no Obstacle to this Design.* *ibid.*
- They are capable of acquiring all Arts; many go abroad for want of Employment.* *ibid.*
- The Ground capable to maintain double the Number of the Inhabitants; their Cattle die in the Spring by starving. The Soil richer than in several other parts.* *ibid.*
- The want of Skill in Agriculture a great loss. Many Families how easily maintain'd. The Isles are proper for a solitary Life, and living at a very easy rate.* 338
- The Isles are healthful. A Tradition of Gold and Silver Mines. A Lead-Mine in the Isle of Ila.* 339
- The Situation of the Isles advantageous for Trade. Two Attempts made by King Charles I. and King Charles II. to advance the Fishery of the Western Isles.* 340
- The Dutch Fishery call'd a Golden Mine. The Herrings come to the Coast of the Isles in May and June; they continue in some parts till January: all other Fish follow the Herring.* 349
- Orkney-Isles, their Situation, Origin, Longitude, Air.* 350
- More Rain than Snow in Winter; Sea-Air dissolves Snow; the Tides alter their Course; Number of the Isles. The main Land, Kirkwal Town, the King and Bishop's Palace.* 351
- St.

## The Contents. xxxi

- St. Magnus's Church; the Town erected by the Danes.* 352
- Scripture-Stories painted; a lofty Inscription; Harbours. The lesser Isles describ'd. The dangerous Whirlpools in time of a Calm.* 354
- Orkney-Isles fruitful, several Mines; no Trees here. A South-East Moon causeth high Tide. Finland Men and their Boat. A medicinal Snail. Plenty of Shell-fish. No venomous Creature in these Isles.* 356
- Herring-fishing neglected; Whales, Amphibia, various Products; Fowl, Cleck-Geese.* 357
- Picts the antient Inhabitants; they are disposs'd by K. Kenneth the Second. Magnus King of Norway, by means of Donald Bane, possesses the Isles.* 358
- Orkney a Title of Honour, the Queen Proprietor.* 359
- Orkney a Stewartry, Udal Right, different Measures, antient State of the Church.* 360—363
- Antient Monuments and Curiosities.* 364—366
- Superstition of the Inhabitants, their Longevity.* 367, 368

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A New MAP  
WESTERN  
of  
SCOTLAND  
By M. Martin

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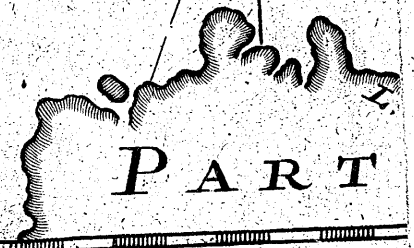
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H. Moll S.

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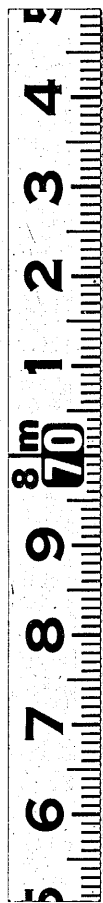


A New MAP of the  
**WESTERN ISLES**  
 of  
**SCOTLAND.**  
 By M. Martin.

H. Moll S.

Green I.  
 Instrahull  
 Lough Foyle  
 I. Swilly  
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A  
**DESCRIPTION**  
 OF THE  
**Western Islands**  
 OF  
**SCOTLAND.**

**T**HE Island of *Lewis* is so call'd from *Leog*, which in the *Irish* Language signifies *Water*, lying on the Surface of the Ground; which is very proper to this Island, because of the great number of fresh-water Lakes that abound in it. The Isle of *Lewis* is by all Strangers and seafaring Men accounted the outmost Tract of Islands lying to the Northwest of *Scotland*. It is divided by several narrow Channels, and distinguish'd by several Proprietors as well as by several Names: by the Islanders it is commonly call'd, *The Long Island*; being from South to North 100 Miles in length, and from East to West from 3 to 14 in breadth. It lies in the Shire of *Ross*, and made part of the Diocess of the Isles.

A

THE

## 2 A DESCRIPTION of the

THE Isle of *Lewis*, properly and strictly so call'd, is 36 Miles in length; *viz.* from the North-point of *Bowling-head* to the South-point of *Huffiness* in *Harries*: and in some places it is 10, and in others 12 Miles in breadth. The Air is temperately cold and moist, and for a Corrective the Natives use a Dose of *Trestarig* or *Usquebaugh*. This Island is for the most part healthy, especially in the middle from South to North. It is arable on the West side; for about sixteen Miles on the Coast; it is likewise plain and arable in several places on the East. The Soil is generally sandy, excepting the Heaths, which in some places are black, and in others a fine red Clay; as appears by the many Vessels made of it by their Women; some for boiling Meat, and others for preserving their Ale, for which they are much better than Barrels of Wood.

THIS Island was reputed very fruitful in Corn, until the late Years of Scarcity and bad Seasons. The Corn sown here is Barley, Oats and Rye; and they have also Flax and Hemp. The best Increase is commonly from the Ground manur'd with Sea-ware: They fatten it also with Soot; but it is observ'd that the Bread made of Corn growing in the Ground so fatten'd, occasions the Jaundice to those that eat it. They observe likewise that Corn produced in Ground which was never tilled before,

## Western Islands of Scotland. 3

fore, occasions several Disorders in those who eat the Bread, or drink the Ale made of that Corn; such as the Head-ach and Vomiting.

THE Natives are very industrious, and undergo a great Fatigue by digging the Ground with Spades, and in most places they turn the Ground so digg'd upside down, and cover it with Sea-ware; and in this manner there are about 500 People employ'd daily for some months. This way of labouring is by them call'd *Timy*; and certainly produces a greater Increase than digging or plowing otherwise. They have little Harrows with wooden Teeth in the first and second Rows, which break the Ground; and in the third Row they have rough Heath, which smooths it. This light Harrow is drawn by a Man having a strong Rope of Horse-hair across his Breast.

THEIR plenty of Corn was such, as dispos'd the Natives to brew several sorts of Liquors, as common *Usquebaugh*, another call'd *Trestarig*, *id est*, *Aqua-vita*, three times distill'd, which is strong and hot; a third sort is four times distill'd, and this by the Natives is call'd *Usquebaugh-baul*, *id est*, *Usquebaugh*, which at first taste affects all the Members of the Body: two spoonfuls of this last Liquor is a sufficient Dose; and if any Man exceed this, it would presently stop his Breath, and endanger his Life. The *Trestarig* and *Usquebaugh-baul*, are both made of Oats.

## 4 A DESCRIPTION of the

THERE are several convenient Bays and Harbours in this Island. *Loch-Grace* and *Loch-tua* lying Norwest, are not to be reckon'd such; tho' Vessels are forc'd in there sometimes by storm. *Loch-Stornway* lies on the East side in the middle of the Island, and is 18 Miles directly South from the Northermost Point of the same. It is a Harbour well known by Seamen. There are several places for anchoring about half a League on the South of this Coast. About 7 miles Southward there is a good Harbour, call'd the *Birkin Isles*: within the Bay call'd *Loch-Colmkill*, 3 miles further South, lies *Loch-Erifort*, which hath an Anchoring-place on the South and North: about 5 miles South lies *Loch-sea-fort*, having two visible Rocks in the Entry; the best Harbour is on the South side.

ABOUT 24 miles South-west lies *Loch-Carlway*, a very capacious, tho' unknown Harbour, being never frequented by any Vessels: tho' the Natives assure me that it is in all respects a convenient Harbour for Ships of the first rate. The best Entrance looks North and North-west, but there is another from the West. On the South side of the Island *Ber-nera*, there are small Islands without the Entrance, which contribute much to the Security of the Harbour, by breaking the Winds and Seas that come from the great Ocean. Four miles

## Western Islands of Scotland. 5

miles to the South on this Coast, is *Loch-Rogue*, which runs in among the Mountains. All the Coasts and Bays above-mention'd, do in fair Weather abound with Cod, Ling, Herring, and all other sorts of Fishes taken in the Western Islands.

COD and Ling are of a very large size, and very plentiful near *Loch-Carlway*; but the Whales very much interrupt the Fishing in this place. There is one sort of Whale remarkable for its Greatness, which the Fishermen distinguish from all others by the Name of the *Gallan-Whale*; because they never see it but at the Promontory of that Name. I was told by the Natives, that about 15 Years ago, this great Whale overturn'd a Fishers-boat, and devour'd three of the Crew; the fourth Man was sav'd by another Boat which happen'd to be near, and saw this Accident. There are many Whales of different sizes, that frequent the Herring-Bays on the East side: the Natives imploy many Boats together in pursuit of the Whales, chasing them up into the Bays, till they wound one of them mortally, and then it runs ashore; and they say that all the rest commonly follow the track of its Blood, and run themselves also on shore in like manner, by which means many of them are kill'd. About five years ago there were fifty young Whales kill'd in this manner, and most of them eaten by the common People, who by experience find



## 6 A DESCRIPTION of the

them to be very nourishing Food. This I have been assur'd of by several Persons, but particularly by some poor meagre People, who became plump and lusty by this Food in the space of a Week: they call it *Sea-Pork*, for so it signifies in their Language. The bigger Whales are more purgative than these lesser ones, but the latter are better for Nourishment.

THE Bays afford plenty of Shell-fish, as Clams, Oysters, Cockles, Mussels, Lymptis, Wilks, Spout-fish; of which last there is such a prodigious quantity cast up out of the Sand of *Loch-tua*, that their noisom Smell infects the Air, and makes it very unhealthful to the Inhabitants, who are not able to consume them, by eating or fathning their Ground with them: and this they say happens most commonly once in seven Years.

THE Bays and Coasts of this Island afford great quantity of small Coral, not exceeding six Inches in length, and about the bigness of a Goose's Quill. This abounds most in *Loch-seafort*, and there is Coraline likewise on this Coast.

THERE are a great many Fresh-water Lakes in this Island, which abound with Trouts and Eels. The common Bait us'd for catching them is Earthworms, but a handful of parboil'd Mussels thrown into the Water, attracts the  
Trouts

## Western Islands of Scotland. 7

Trouts and Eels to the place: the fittest time for catching them, is, when the Wind blows from the South-west. There are several Rivers on each side this Island which afford Salmons, as also black Mussels, in which many times Pearl is found.

THE Natives in the Village *Barvas* retain an antient Custom of sending a Man very early to cross *Barvas* River, every first Day of *May*, to prevent any Females crossing it first; for that they say would hinder the Salmon from coming into the River all the year round: they pretend to have learn'd this from a foreign Sailor, who was shipwreck'd upon that Coast a long time ago. This Observation they maintain to be true from Experience.

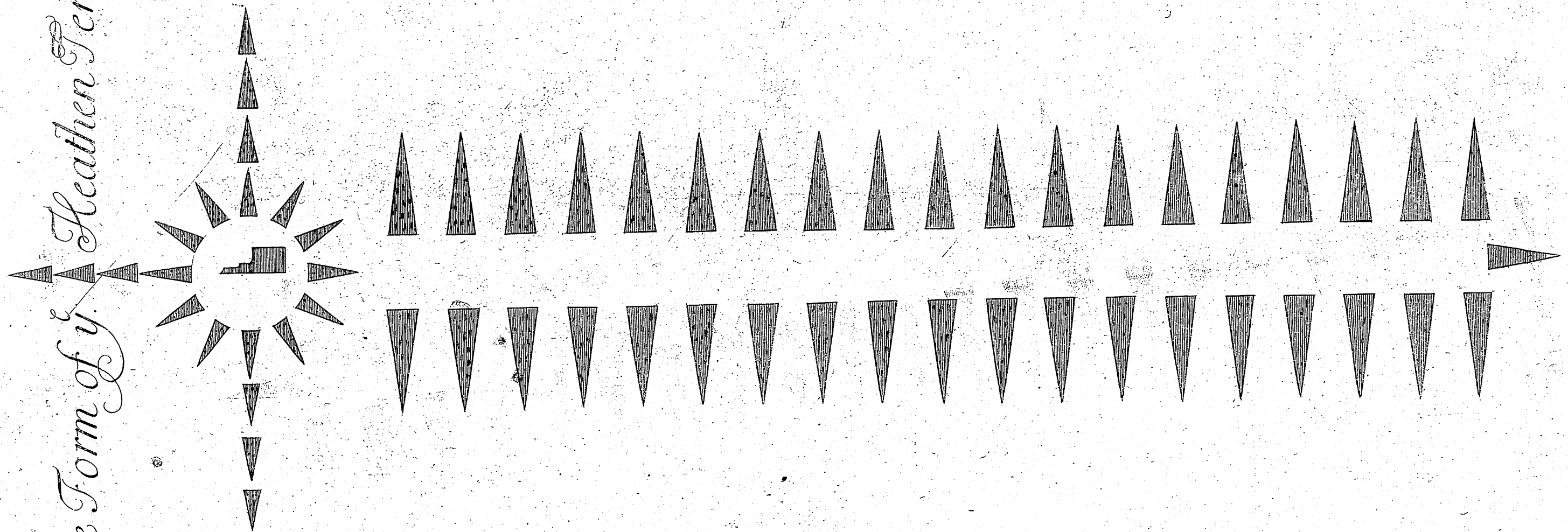
THERE are several Springs and Fountains of curious Effects; such as that at *Loch-Carlway*, that never whitens Linen, which hath often been try'd by the Inhabitants. The Well at *St. Cowsten's* Church never boils any kind of Meat, tho it be kept on fire a whole day. *St. Andrew's* Well in the Village *Shadar* is by the vulgar Natives made a Test to know if a sick Person will die of the Distemper he labours under. They send one with a wooden Dish to bring some of the Water to the Patient, and if the Dish which is then laid softly upon the Surface of the Water turn round Sun-ways, they conclude that the Patient will recover of that Distemper; but if otherwise, that he will die.

8 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

THERE are many Caves on the Coast of this Island, in which great numbers of Orters and Seals do lie; there be also many Land and Sea-Fowls that build and hatch in them. The Cave in *Loch-Grace* hath several pieces of a hard Substance in the bottom, which distil from the top of it. There are several natural and artificial Forts in the Coast of this Island, which are call'd *Dun*, from the *Irish* word *Dain*, which signifies a Fort. The natural Forts here are *Dun-owle*, *Dun-coradil*, *Dun-eisten*.

THE Castle at *Stornway-Village* was destroy'd by the *English* Garison, kept there by *Oliver Cromwell*. Some few miles to the North of *Brago* there is a Fort compos'd of large Stones; it is of a round form, made taperwise towards the top, and is three stories high: the Wall is double, and hath several Doors and Stairs, so that one may go round within the Wall. There are some Cairnes or Heaps of Stones gather'd together on Heaths, and some of them at a great distance from any Ground that affords Stones: such as *Cairnwarp* near *Mournagh-Hill*, &c. These artificial Forts are likewise built upon Heaths at a considerable distance also from stony Ground. The *Thrusbel* Stone in the Parish of *Barvas* is above 20 foot high, and almost as much in breadth. There are three erected Stones upon the North side of *Loch-Carlway*, about 12 foot high each. Several

*The Form of y Feather Temple*



The S

Western Islands of Scotland. 9

veral other Stones are to be seen here in remote places, and some of them standing on one end. Some of the ignorant Vulgar say, they were Men by Inchantment turn'd into Stones; and others say, they are Monuments of Persons of Note kill'd in Battel.

THE most remarkable Stones for Number, Bigness, and Order, that fell under my Observation, were at the Village of *Classermis*; where there are 39 Stones set up 6 or 7 foot high, and 2 foot in breadth each: they are plac'd in form of an Avenue, the breadth of which is 8 foot, and the distance between each Stone six; and there is a Stone set up in the Entrance of this Avenue: at the South end there is join'd to this Range of Stone a Circle of 12 Stones of equal distance and height with the other 39. There is one set up in the Center of this Circle, which is 13 foot high, and shap'd like the Rudder of a Ship: without this Circle there are 4 Stones standing to the West, at the same distance with the Stones in the Circle; and there are 4 Stones set up in the same manner at the South and East sides. I enquir'd of the Inhabitants what Tradition they had from their Ancestors concerning these Stones; and they told me, it was a Place appointed for Worship in the time of Heathenism, and that the Chief *Druid* or Priest stood near the big Stone in the center, from whence he address'd himself to the People that surrounded him.

UPON

e.g.



## 10 A DESCRIPTION of the

UPON the same Coast also there is a Circle of high Stones standing on one end, about a quarter of a mile's distance from those above-mention'd.

THE Shore in *Egginess* abounds with many little smooth Stones prettily variegated with all sorts of Colours; they are of a round Form, which is probably occasion'd by the tossing of the Sea, which in those parts is very violent.

THE Cattle produc'd here are Cows, Horses, Sheep, Goats, Hogs. These Cows are little, but very fruitful, and their Beef very sweet and tender. The Horses are considerably less here, than in the opposite Continent, yet they plow and harrow as well as bigger Horses, tho in the Spring-time they have nothing to feed upon but Sea-ware. There are abundance of Deer in the Chase of *Oservaul*, which is 15 miles in compass, consisting in Mountains, and Valleys between them: this affords good Pasturage for the Deer, black Cattle, and Sheep. This Forest, for so they call it, is surrounded with the Sea, except about one mile upon the West side: the Deer are forc'd to feed on Sea-ware, when the Snow and Frost continue long, having no Wood to shelter in, and so are expos'd to the Rigour of the Season.

I SAW big Roots of Trees at the head of *Loch-Erisport*, and there is about a hundred young

## Western Islands of Scotland. 11

young Birch and Hazle Trees on the South-west side of *Loch-Stornway*, but there is no more Wood in the Island. There's great variety of Land and Sea-Fowls to be seen in this and the lesser adjacent Islands.

THE *Amphibia* here are Seals and Otters; the former are eaten by the Vulgar, who find them to be as nourishing as Beef and Mutton.

THE Inhabitants of this Island are well proportion'd, free from any bodily Imperfections, and of a good Stature: the Colour of their Hair is commonly a light-brown, or red, but few of them are black. They are a healthful and strong-body'd People, several arrive to a great Age: Mr. *Daniel Morison*, late Minister of *Barvas*, one of my Acquaintance, died lately in his 86th Year.

THEY are generally of a sanguine Constitution: this Place hath not been troubled with Epidemical Diseases, except the Small-Pox, which comes but seldom, and then it sweeps away many young People. The Chin-cough afflicts Children too: the Fever, Diarrhea, Dysentery, and the falling down of the Uvula, Fevers, Jaundice and Stitches, and the ordinary Coughs proceeding from Cold, are the Diseases most prevalent here. The common Cure us'd for removing Fevers and Pleurifies, is to let Blood plentifully. For curing the Diarrhea

12 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

Diarrhea and Dysentery, they take small quantities of the Kernel of the black Molocca Beans, call'd by them *Crospunk*; and this being ground into powder, and drunk in boil'd Milk, is by daily experience found to be very effectual. They likewise use a little Dose of *Trestarig* Water with good success. When the Cough affects them, they drink *Brochan* plentifully, which is Oat-meal and Water boil'd together; to which they sometimes add Butter. This Drink us'd at going to bed, disposeth one to sleep and sweat, and is very diuretick, if it hath no Salt in it. They use also the Roots of Nettles, and the Roots of Reeds boil'd in Water, and add Yeast to it, which provokes it to ferment; and this they find also beneficial for the Cough. When the Uvula falls down, they ordinarily cut it, in this manner: They take a long Quill, and putting a Horse-hair double into it, make a noose at the end of the Quill, and putting it about the lower end of the Uvula, they cut off from the Uvula all that's below the Hair with a pair of Scissors; and then the Patient swallows a little Bread and Cheese, which cures him. This Operation is not attended with the least Inconvenience, and cures the Distemper so that it never returns. They cure green Wounds with Ointment made of Golden-rod, All-heal, and fresh Butter. The Jaundice they cure two ways: the first is by laying the Patient on his face, and pretending to look upon his Back-bones, they pre-

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 13

presently pour a Pail-full of cold Water on his bare Back; and this proves successful. The second Cure they perform by taking the Tongs, and making them red-hot in the Fire; then pulling off the Clothes from the Patient's Back, he who holds the Tongs gently touches the Patient on the *Vertebra* upwards of the Back, which makes him furiously run out of doors, still supposing the hot Iron is on his Back, till the Pain be abated; which happens very speedily, and the Patient recovers soon after. *Donald-Chuan*, in a Village near *Bragir*, in the Parish of *Barvas*, had by Accident cut his Toe at the Change of the Moon, and it bleeds a fresh Drop at every Change of the Moon ever since.

*ANNA*, Daughter to *George*, in the Village of *Melboft*, in the Parish of *Ey*, having been with Child, and the ordinary time of her Delivery being expir'd, the Child made its Passage by the Fundament for some Years, coming away Bone after Bone. She liv'd several Years after this, but never had any more Children. Some of the Natives, both of the Island of *Lewis* and *Harries*, who convers'd with her at the time when this extraordinary thing happen'd, gave me this Account.

THE Natives are generally ingenious and quick of Apprehension; they have a mechanical Genius, and several of both Sexes have a

Gift

14 *A DESCRIPTION of the*  
 Gift of Poesy, and are able to form a Satire or Panegyrick *ex tempore*, without the Assistance of any stronger Liquor than Water to raise their Fancy. They are great Lovers of *Musick*; and when I was there they gave an Account of eighteen Men who could play on the Violin pretty well, without being taught: They are still very hospitable, but the late Years of Scarcity brought them very low, and many of the poor People have died by Famine. The Inhabitants are very dextrous in the Exercises of Swimming, Archery, Vaulting, or Leaping, and are very stout and able Seamen; they will tug at the Oar all day long upon Bread and Water, and a Snuff of *Tobacco*.

*Of the inferiour adjacent Islands.*

**W**ITHOUT the Mouth of *Loch-Carlway* lies the small Island *Garve*; it is a high Rock, about half a Mile in compass, and fit only for Pasturage. Not far from this lies the Island *Berinsay*, which is a quarter of a Mile in compass, naturally a strong Fort, and formerly us'd as such, being almost inaccessible.

THE Island *Fladda*, which is of small compass, lies between *Berinsay* and the main Land. Within

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 15

Within these lies the Island call'd *Bernera Minor*, two Miles in length, and fruitful in Corn and Grass. Within this Island, in the middle of *Loch-Carlway*, lies the Island *Bernera Major*, being four Miles in length, and as much in breadth: It is fruitful also in Corn and Grass, and hath four Villages. *Alexander Mack-Lenan*, who lives in *Bernera Major*, told me, that some Years ago a very extraordinary Ebb happen'd there, exceeding any that had been seen before or since; it happen'd about the Vernal Equinox, the Sea retir'd so far as to discover a Stone-wall, the length of it being about 40 yards, and in some parts about 5, 6, or 7 foot high, they suppose much more of it to be under Water: it lies opposite to the West-side of *Lewis*, to which it adjoins. He says that it is regularly built, and without all doubt the effect of human Industry. The Natives had no Tradition about this piece of Work, so that I can form no other Conjecture about it, but that it has probably been erected for a Defence against the Sea, or for the use of Fishermen, but came in time to be overflow'd. Near to both *Berneras* lie the small Islands of *Kjalifay*, *Cavay*, *Carvay*, and *Grenim*.

NEAR to the North-west Promontory of *Carlway Bay*, call'd *Galen-head*, are the little Islands of *Pabbay*, *Shirem*, *Vaxay*, *Wuya*, the Great and Lesser. To the North-west of *Gallan-head*, and within six Leagues of it, lie the

16 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

the *Flannan-Islands*, which the Seamen call *North-hunters*; they are but small Islands, and fix in number, and maintain about seventy Sheep yearly. The Inhabitants of the adjacent Lands of the *Lewis*, having a right to these Islands, visit them once every Summer, and there make a great purchase of Fowls, Eggs, Down, Feathers, and Quills. When they go to Sea, they have their Boat well mann'd, and make towards the Islands with an East-Wind; but if before or at the Landing the Wind turn Westerly, they hoist up Sail, and steer directly home again. If any of their Crew is a Novice, and not vers'd in the Customs of the place, he must be instructed perfectly in all the Punctilio's observ'd here before Landing; and to prevent Inconveniencies that they think may ensue upon the Transgression of the least Nicety observ'd here, every Novice is always join'd with another, that can instruct him all the time of their Fowling: so all the Boat's Crew are match'd in this manner. After their Landing, they fasten the Boat to the sides of a Rock, and then fix a wooden Ladder, by laying a Stone at the foot of it, to prevent its falling into the Sea; and when they are got up into the Island, all of them uncover their Heads, and make a turn Sun-ways round, thanking God for their Safety. The first Injunction given after Landing, is not to ease Nature in that place where the Boat lies, for that they reckon a Crime of the highest nature, and

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 17

and of dangerous consequence to all their Crew; for they have a great regard to that very piece of the Rock upon which they first set their Feet, after escaping the danger of the Ocean.

THE biggest of these Islands is call'd *Island-More*; it has the Ruins of a Chappel dedicated to *St. Flannan*, from whom the Island derives its Name. When they are come within about 20 Paces of the Altar, they all strip themselves of their upper Garments at once; and their upper Clothes being laid upon a Stone, which stands there on purpose for that use, all the Crew pray three times before they begin Fowling: the first day they say the first Prayer, advancing towards the Chappel upon their Knees; the second Prayer is said as they go round the Chappel; the third is said hard by or at the Chappel: and this is their Morning-Service. Their *Vespers* are perform'd with the like number of Prayers. Another Rule is, That it is absolutely unlawful to kill a Fowl with a Stone, for that they reckon a great Barbarity, and directly contrary to antient Custom.

IT is also unlawful to kill a Fowl before they ascend by the Ladder. It is absolutely unlawful to call the Island of *St. Kilda* (which lies thirty Leagues Southward) by its proper *Irish* Name *Hirt*, but only the high Country. They must not so much as once name the

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Islands



## 18 A DESCRIPTION of the

Islands in which they are fowling, by the ordinary Name *Flannan*, but only the Country. There are several other things that must not be call'd by their common Names: *e. g.* *Visk*, which in the Language of the Natives signifies *Water*, they call *Burn*: a Rock, which in their Language is *Creg*, must here be call'd *Cruey*, *i. e.* *hard*: *Shone* in their Language express'd by *Claddach*, must here be call'd *Vah*, *i. e.* a *Cave*: *Sour* in their Language is express'd *Gort*, but must here be call'd *Gaine*, *i. e.* *Sharp*: *Slippery*, which is express'd *Bog*, must be call'd *Soft*: and several other things to this purpose. They account it also unlawful to kill a Fowl after Evening-Prayers. There is an antient Custom, by which the Crew is oblig'd not to carry home any Sheep-suet, let them kill ever so many Sheep in these Islands. One of their principal Customs is not to steal or eat any thing unknown to their Partner, else the Transgressor (they say) will certainly vomit it up; which they reckon as a just Judgment. When they have loaded their Boat sufficiently with Sheep, Fowls, Eggs, Down, Fish, &c. they make the best of their way homeward. It's observed of the Sheep of these Islands, that they are exceeding fat, and have long Horns.

I HAD this superstitious Account not only from several of the Natives of the *Lewis*, but likewise from two who had been in the *Flannan*

## Western Islands of Scotland. 19

*nan* Islands the preceding Year. I ask'd one of them if he pray'd at home as often, and as fervently as he did when in the *Flannan* Islands, and he plainly confess'd to me that he did not: adding further, that these remote Islands were places of inherent Sanctity; and that there was none ever yet landed in them but found himself more dispos'd to Devotion there, than any where else. The Island of *Pigmies*, or, as the Natives call it, *The Island of Little Men*, is but of small extent. There has been many small Bones dug out of the Ground here, resembling those of Human Kind more than any other. This gave ground to a Tradition which the Natives have of a very Low-statur'd People living once here, call'd *Lusbirdan*, *i. e.* *Pigmies*.

THE Island *Rona* is reckon'd about 20 Leagues from the North-east Point of *Nefs* in *Lewis*, and counted but a Mile in length, and about half a Mile in breadth: it hath a Hill in the West part, and is only visible from the *Lewis* in a fair Summers-day. I had an Account of this little Island, and the Custom of it from several Natives of *Lewis*, who had been upon the place; but more particularly from Mr. *Daniel Morison*, Minister of *Barvas*, after his Return from *Rona* Island, which then belong'd to him, as part of his *Glebe*. Upon my landing (says he) the Natives receiv'd me very affectionately, and address'd me with

their usual Salutation to a Stranger: *God save you, Pilgrim, you are heartily welcome here; for we have had repeated Apparitions of your Person among us* (after the manner of the second Sight) *and we heartily congratulate your Arrival in this our remote Country.* One of the Natives would needs express his high Esteem for my Person, by making a turn round about me Sun-ways, and at the same time blessing me, and wishing me all Happiness; but I bid him let alone that piece of Homage, telling him I was sensible of his good Meaning towards me: but this poor Man was not a little disappointed, as were also his Neighbours; for they doubted not but this antient Ceremony would have been very acceptable to me: and one of them told me, That this was a thing due to my Character from them, as to their Chief and Patron, and they could not, nor would not fail to perform it. They conducted me to the little Village where they dwell, and in the way thither there were three Inclosures; and as I entred each of these, the Inhabitants severally saluted me, taking me by the hand, and saying, *Traveller, you are welcome here.* They went along with me to the House that they had assign'd for my Lodging; where there was a bundle of Straw laid on the Floor, for a Seat for me to sit upon. After a little time was spent in general Discourse, the Inhabitants retir'd to their respective Dwelling-Houses; and in this Interval, they

they kill'd each Man a Sheep, being in all five, answerable to the number of their Families. The Skins of the Sheep were intire, and flay'd off so from the Neck to the Tail, that they were in form like a Sack. These Skins being flay'd off after this manner, were by the Inhabitants instantly fill'd with Barley-meal; and this they gave me by way of a Present: one of their number acted as Speaker for the rest, saying, *Traveller, we are very sensible of the Favour you have done us in coming so far with a Design to instruct us in our way to Happiness, and at the same time to venture your self on the great Ocean; pray be pleas'd to accept of this small Present, which we humbly offer as an Expression of our sincere Love to you.* This I accepted, tho in a very coarse Dress; but it was given with such an Air of Hospitality and Good-will, as deserv'd Thanks. They presented my Man also with some pecks of Meal, as being likewise a Traveller: the Boats-Crew having been in *Rona* before, were not reckon'd Strangers, and therefore there was no Present given them, but their daily Maintenance.

THERE is a Chappel here dedicated to *St. Ronan*, fenc'd with a Stone-Wall round it; and they take care to keep it neat and clean, and sweep it every day. There is an Altar in it, on which there lies a big Plank of Wood about ten Foot in length; every Foot has a hole in it, and in every hole a Stone, to which

22 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

the Natives ascribe several Virtues: one of them is singular, as they say, for promoting speedy Delivery to a Woman in Travail.

THEY repeat the Lord's Prayer, Creed, and Ten Commandments in the Chappel every Sunday Morning. They have Cows, Sheep, Barley and Oats, and live a harmless Life, being perfectly ignorant of most of those Vices that abound in the World. They know nothing of Money or Gold, having no occasion for either; they neither sell nor buy, but only barter for such little things as they want: they covet no Wealth, being fully content and satisfy'd with Food and Raiment; tho at the same time they are very precise in the matter of Property among themselves: for none of them will by any means allow his Neighbour to fish within his Property; and every one must exactly observe not to make any incroachment on his Neighbour. They have an agreeable and hospitable Temper for all Strangers: they concern not themselves about the rest of Mankind, except the Inhabitants in the North part of *Lewis*. They take their Surname from the Colour of the Sky, Rain-bow, and Clouds. There are only five Families in this small Island, and every Tenant hath his Dwelling-house, a Barn, a House where their best Effects are preserv'd, a House for their Cattle, and a Porch on each side of the Door to keep off the Rain or Snow. Their Houses are

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 23

are built with Stone, and thatched with Straw, which is kept down with Ropes of the same, pois'd with Stones. They wear the same Habit with those in *Lewis*, and speak only *Irish*. When any of them comes to the *Lewis*, which is seldom, they are astonish'd to see so many People. They much admire Grey-hounds, and love to have them in their company. They are mightily pleas'd at the sight of Horses; and one of them observing a Horse to neigh, ask'd if that Horse laugh'd at him. A Boy from *Rona* perceiving a Colt run towards him, was so much frighted at it, that he jump'd into a Bush of Nettles, where his whole Skin became full of Blisters.

ANOTHER of the Natives of *Rona* having had the opportunity of travelling as far as *Coul*, in the Shire of *Rofs*, which is the Seat of Sir *Alexander Mac-kenzie*, every thing he saw there was surprizing to him; and when he heard the noise of those who walk'd in the Rooms above him, he presently fell to the ground, thinking thereby to save his Life, for he suppos'd that the House was coming down over his head. When Mr. *Morison* the Minister was in *Rona*, two of the Natives courted a Maid with intention to marry her; and being marry'd to one of them afterwards, the other was not a little disappointed, because there was no other Match for him in this Island. The Wind blowing fair, Mr. *Mo-*

24 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

*rison* failed directly for *Lewis*; but after three hours failing was forced back to *Rona* by a contrary Wind: and at his landing, the poor Man that had lost his Sweetheart was overjoy'd, and express'd himself in these words; I bless God and *Ronan* that you are return'd again, for I hope you will now make me happy, and give me a right to enjoy the Woman every other Year by turns, that so we both may have Issue by her. Mr. *Morison* could not refrain from smiling at this unexpected Request, chid the poor Man for his unreasonable Demand, and desir'd him to have patience for a Year longer, and he would send him a Wife from *Lewis*; but this did not ease the poor Man, who was tormented with the thoughts of dying without Issue.

ANOTHER who wanted a Wife, and having got a Shilling from a Seaman that happen'd to land there, went and gave this Shilling to Mr. *Morison*, to purchase him a Wife in the *Lewis*, and send her to him, for he was told that this Piece of Mony was a thing of extraordinary Value; and his Desire was gratify'd the ensuing Year.

ABOUT 14 Years ago a Swarm of Rats, but none knows how, came into *Rona*, and in a short time eat up all the Corn in the Island. In a few months after, some Seamen landed there, who robbed the poor People of

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 25

of their Bull. These Misfortunes, and the want of Supply from *Lewis* for the space of a Year, occasion'd the Death of all that antient Race of People. The Steward of *St. Kilda* being by a Storm driven in there, told me that he found a Woman with her Child on her Breast, both lying dead at the side of a Rock. Some years after, the Minister (to whom the Island belongeth) sent a new Colony to this Island, with suitable Supplies. The following Year a Boat was sent to them with some more Supplies, and Orders to receive the Rents; but the Boat being lost, as it is suppos'd, I can give no further account of this late Plantation.

THE Inhabitants of this little Island say, that the Cuckow is never seen or heard here, but after the Death of the Earl of *Seaforth*, or the Minister.

THE Rock *Soulisker* lieth four Leagues to the East of *Rona*; it is a quarter of a mile in Circumference, and abounds with great numbers of Sea Fowl, such as Solan Geese, Guillamote, Coulter-Neb, Puffin, and several other sorts. The Fowl called the Colk is found here: it is less than a Goose, all covered with Down, and when it hatches it casts its Feathers, which are of divers Colours; it has a Tuft on its head resembling that of a Peacock, and a Train longer than that of a House-



## 26 A DESCRIPTION of the

Houfe-Cock, but the Hen has not so much Ornament and Beauty.

THE Island *Siant*, or, as the Natives call it, *Island-More*, lies to the East of *Ushiness* in *Lewis*, about a League. There are three small Islands here; the two Southern Islands are separated only by Spring-tides, and are two miles in Circumference. *Island-More* hath a Chappel in it dedicated to the Virgin *Mary*, and is fruitful in Corn and Grass: the Island joining to it on the West is only for Pasturage. I saw a couple of Eagles here: the Natives told me, that these Eagles would never suffer any of their kind to live there but themselves, and that they drove away their young ones as soon as they were able to fly. And they told me likewise, that those Eagles are so careful of the place of their abode, that they never yet killed any Sheep or Lamb in the Island, tho the Bones of Lambs, of Fawns, and Wild-Fowls, are frequently found in and about their Nests; so that they make their Purchase in the opposite Islands, the nearest of which is a League distant. This Island is very strong and inaccessible, save on one side where the Ascent is narrow, and somewhat resembling a Stair, but a great deal more high and steep; notwithstanding which, the Cows pass and repass by it safely, tho one would think it uneasy for a Man to climb. About a Musket-shot further North lies the biggest of the

## Western Islands of Scotland. 27

the Islands call'd *More*, being two miles in Circumference: It is fruitful in Corn and Pasturage, the Cows here are much fatter than any I saw in the Island of *Lewis*. There is a blue Stone in the Surface of the Ground here, moist while it lies there, but when dry, it becomes very hard; it is capable of any Impression, and I have seen a Sett of Table-Men made of this Stone, prettily carved with different Figures. There is a Promontory in the North-end of the Island of *Lewis*, call'd *Eoropy-Point*, which is suppos'd to be the furthest to North-west of any part in *Europe*.

THESE Islands are divided into two Parishes, one call'd *Barvas*, and the other *Ey* or *T*, both which are Parsonages, and each of them having a Minister. The Names of the Churches in *Lewis* Isles, and the Saints to whom they were dedicated, are *St. Columkil*, in the Island of that Name; *St. Pharaer* in *Kaerness*, *St. Lemman* in *Sternway*, *St. Collum* in *Ey*, *St. Cutchou* in *Garboft*, *St. Aula* in *Grease*, *St. Michael* in *Tollosta*, *St. Collum* in *Garien*, *St. Ronan* in *Eorobie*, *St. Thomas* in *Habost*, *St. Peter* in *Shanabost*, *St. Clemen* in *Dell*, *Holy-Cross* Church in *Galan*, *St. Brigit* in *Barove*, *St. Peter* in *Shiadir*, *St. Mary* in *Barvas*, *St. John Baptist* in *Bragar*, *St. Kiaran* in *Liani-Shadir*, *St. Michael* in *Kirvig*, *St. Macrel* in *Kirkibost*, *St. Dondan* in *Little Berneray*, *St. Michael* in the same Island, *St. Peter* in *Pabbay* Island,

## 28 A DESCRIPTION of the

Island, St. Christopher's Chappel in Uge, and Stornway Church: all these Churches and Chapels were, before the Reformation, Sanctuaries; and if a Man had committed Murder, he was then secure and safe when once within their Precincts.

THEY were in greater Veneration in those days than now: it was the constant Practice of the Natives to kneel at first sight of the Church, tho at a great distance from them, and then they said their *Pater-noster*. John Morison of Bragir told me, that when he was a Boy, and going to the Church of St. Mulvay, he observed the Natives to kneel and repeat the *Pater-noster* at four miles distance from the Church. The Inhabitants of this Island had an antient Custom to sacrifice to a Sea-God, call'd *Shony*, at Hallow-tide, in the manner following: The Inhabitants round the Island came to the Church of St. Mulvay, having each Man his Provision along with him; every Family furnish'd a Peck of Malt, and this was brew'd into Ale: one of their number was pick'd out to wade into the Sea up to the middle, and carrying a Cup of Ale in his hand, standing still in that posture, cry'd out with a loud Voice, saying, *Shony, I give you this Cup of Ale, hoping that you'll be so kind as to send us plenty of Sea-ware, for enriching our Ground the ensuing Year*: and so threw the Cup of Ale into the Sea. This was perform'd in the Night-time. At his Return to  
Land,

## Western Islands of Scotland. 29

Land, they all went to Church, where there was a Candle burning upon the Altar; and then standing silent for a little time, one of them gave a Signal, at which the Candle was put out, and immediately all of them went to the Fields, where they fell a drinking their Ale, and spent the remainder of the Night in Dancing and Singing, &c.

THE next Morning they all return'd home, being well satisfy'd that they had punctually observ'd this Solemn Anniversary, which they believ'd to be a powerful means to procure a plentiful Crop. Mr. Daniel and Mr. Kenneth Morison, Ministers in Lewis, told me they spent several Years, before they could persuade the vulgar Natives to abandon this ridiculous piece of Superstition; which is quite abolish'd for these 32 Years past.

THE Inhabitants are all Protestants, except one Family, who are Roman Catholicks. I was told, that about 14 Years ago, three or four Fishermen, who then forsook the Protestant Communion, and imbrac'd the Romish Faith, having the opportunity of a Popish Priest on the place, they apply'd themselves to him for some of the Holy Water; it being usual for the Priests to sprinkle it into the Bays, as an infallible means to procure plenty of Herring, as also to bring them into those Nets that are besprinkled with it. These Fishers accordingly

## 30 A DESCRIPTION of the

ly having got the Water, poured it upon their Nets before they drop'd them into the Sea; they likewise turn'd the inside of their Coats outwards, after which they set their Nets in the Evening at the usual hour. The Protestant Fishers, who us'd no other means than throwing their Nets into the Sea, at the same time were unconcern'd; but the Papists being impatient and full of expectation, got next Morning betimes to draw their Nets, and being come to the place, they soon perceiv'd that all their Nets were lost; but the Protestants found their Nets safe, and full of Herring: which was no small mortification to the Priest and his Profelytes, and expos'd them to the derision of their Neighbours.

THE Protestant Natives observe the Festivals of *Christmas*, *Good-Friday*, *Easter*, and *Michaelmas*: upon this last they have an Anniversary Cavalcade, and then both Sexes ride on horse-back.

THERE is a Village call'd *Storn-Bay*, at the head of the Bay of that Name; it consists of about sixty Families: there are some Houses of Entertainment in it, as also a Church, and a School, in which *Latin* and *English* are taught. The Steward of the *Lewis* hath his Residence in this Village. The *Lewis*, which was possess'd by *Mack-Leod* of *Lewis* for several Centuries, is, since the Reign of King *James* the Sixth, become

## Western Islands of Scotland. 31

come the Property of the Earl of *Seaforth*, who still enjoys it.

## The Isle of HARRIES.

THE *Harries* being separated from *Lewis* is 18 Miles, from the *Hushiness* on the West Ocean to *Loch-Seafort* in the East; from this bounding to the Point of *Strond* in the South of *Harries*, it is 24 Miles; and in some places 4, 5, and 6 Miles in breadth. The Soil is almost the same with that of *Lewis*, and it produces the same sorts of Corn, but a greater Increase.

THE Air is temperately cold, and the Natives endeavour to qualify it by taking a Dose of *Aquavita*, or *Brandy*; for they brew no such Liquors as *Trestarig*, or *Usquebaugh-baul*. The Eastern Coast of *Harries* is generally rocky and mountainous, cover'd with Grass and Heath. The West side is for the most part arable on the Sea-Coast; some parts of the Hills on the East side are naked without Earth. The Soil being dry and sandy, is fruitful when manur'd with Sea-ware. The Grass on the West side is most Clover and Dasy, which in the Summer yields a most fragrant Smell. Next to *Loch-Seafort*, which for some miles divides the *Lewis* from *Harries*, is the notable Harbour within the Island, by sea-faring

32 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

faring Men call'd *Glas*, and by the Natives *Scalpa*: it is a mile and a half long from South to North, and a mile in breadth. There is an Entrance on the South and North ends of the Isle, and several good Harbours in each, well known to the generality of Seamen. Within the Isle is *Loch-Tarbat*, running 4 miles West; it hath several small Isles, and is sometimes frequented by Herring. Without the *Loch* there is plenty of Cod, Ling, and large Eels.

ABOUT half a League further on the same Coast, lies *Loch-Stokness*, which is about a mile in length: there is a fresh-water Lake at the Entrance of the Island, which affords Oyfters, and several sorts of Fish, the Sea having access to it at Spring-tides.

ABOUT a League and a half farther South, is *Loch-Finisbay*, an excellent, tho' unknown Harbour: the Land lies low, and hides it from the sight of the sea-faring Men, till they come very near the Coast. There are, besides this Harbour, many Creeks on this side, for Barks and lesser Boats.

FRESH-water Lakes abound in this Island, and are well stor'd with Trout, Eels, and Salmon. Each Lake has a River running from it to the Sea, from whence the Salmon comes about the beginning of *May*, and sooner if the Season  
be

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 33

be warm. The best time for angling for Salmon and Trout, is when a warm South-west Wind blows. They use Earth-worms commonly for Bait, but Cockles attract the Salmon better than any other.

THERE is variety of excellent Springs issuing from all the Mountains of this Island, but the Wells on the Plains near the Sea are not good. There is one remarkable Fountain lately discover'd near *Marvag*-houses, on the Eastern Coast, and has a large Stone by it, which is sufficient to direct a Stranger to it. The Natives find by experience that it is very effectual for restoring lost Appetite; all that drink of it become very soon hungry, though they have eat plentifully but an hour before: the truth of this was confirm'd to me by those that were perfectly well, and also by those that were infirm; for it had the same effect on both.

THERE is a Well in the Heath, a mile to the East from the Village *Borve*; the Natives say that they find it efficacious against Cholicks, Stitches, and Gravel.

THERE are several Caves in the Mountains, and on each side the Coast: the largest and best fortify'd by Nature, is that in the Hill *Ulweal*, in the middle of a high Rock; the Passage leading to it is so narrow, that one  
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## 34 A DESCRIPTION of the

only can enter at a time. This advantage renders it secure from any Attempt; for one single Man is able to keep off a thousand, if he have but a Staff in his hand, since with the least touch of it he may throw the strongest Man down the Rock. The Cave is capacious enough for 50 Men to lodg. in: it hath two Wells in it, one of which is excluded from Dogs; for they say that if a Dog do but taste of the Water, the Well presently dryeth up: and for this reason, all such as have occasion to lodg. there, take care to tie their Dogs, that they may not have access to the Water. The other Well is call'd the Dogs-Well, and is only drunk by them.

THERE are several antient Forts erected here, which the Natives say were built by the *Danes*: they are of a round form, and have very thick Walls, and a Passage in 'em by which one can go round the Fort. Some of the Stones that compose 'em are very large: these Forts are named after the Villages in which they are built, as that in *Borve* is call'd *Down-Borve*, &c. They are built at convenient distances on each side the Coast, and there is a Fort built in every one of the lesser Isles.

THERE are several Stones here erected on one end, one of which is in the Village of *Borve*, about 7 foot high. There is another Stone of the same height to be seen in the opposite

## Western Islands of Scotland. 35

posite Isle of *Faransey*. There are several Heaps of Stones, commonly call'd *Karnes*, on the tops of Hills and rising Grounds on the Coast, upon which they us'd to burn Heath, as a Signal of an approaching Enemy. There was always a Sentinel at each *Karne* to observe the Sea-Coast; the Steward of the Isle made frequent Rounds, to take notice of the Sentinels, and if he found any of them asleep, he stript them of their Clothes, and deser'd their personal Punishments to the Proprietor of the Place. This Isle produceth the same kind of Cattle, Sheep, and Goats, that are in the *Lewis*. The Natives gave me an account, that a Couple of Goats did grow wild on the Hills, and after they had increas'd, they were observ'd to bring forth their Young twice a Year.

THERE are abundance of Deer in the Hills and Mountains here, commonly called the Forest; which is 18 miles in length from East to West: the number of Deer computed to be in this place, is at least 2000; and there is none permitted to hunt there without a Licence from the Steward to the Forester. There is a particular Mountain, and above a Mile of Ground surrounding it, to which no Man hath access to hunt, this place being reserv'd for *Mack-leod* himself; who when he is dispos'd to hunt, is sure to find Game enough there.



BOTH Hills and Valleys in the Forest are well provided with plenty of good Grass mix'd with Heath, which is all the shelter these Deer have during the Winter and Spring: there is not a Shrub of Wood to be seen in all the Forest; and when a Storm comes, the Deer betake themselves to the Sea-Coast, where they feed upon the *Alga Marina*, or *Sea-ware*.

THE *Mertrick*, a four-footed Creature, about the size of a big Cat, is pretty numerous in this Isle: they have a fine Skin, which is smooth as any Fur, and of a brown Colour. They say that the Dung of this Animal yields a Scent like Musk.

THE *Amphibia* here are Otters and Seals: the latter are eat by the meaner sort of People, who say they are very nourishing. The Natives take them with Nets, whose ends are tyed by a Rope to the strong *Alga*, or *Sea-ware*, growing on the Rocks.

THIS Island abounds with variety of Land and Sea-Fowl, and particularly with very good Hawks.

THERE are Eagles here of two sorts; the one is of a large size and grey colour, and these are very destructive to the Fawns, Sheep, and Lambs.

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THE other is considerably less, and black, and shap'd like a Hawk, and more destructive to the Deer, &c. than the bigger sort.

THERE is no venomous Creatures of any kind here, except a little Viper, which was not thought venomous till of late, that a Woman died of a Wound she receiv'd from one of them.

I HAVE seen a great many Rats in the Village *Rowdil*, which became very troublesome to the Natives, and destroy'd all their Corn, Milk, Butter, Cheese, &c. They could not extirpate these Vermin for some time by all their endeavours. A considerable number of Cats was employ'd for this end, but were still worsted, and became perfectly faint, because overpower'd by the Rats, who were twenty to one. At length one of the Natives, of more sagacity than his Neighbours, found an Expedient to renew his Cat's Strength and Courage, which was by giving it warm Milk after every Encounter with the Rats; and the like being given to all the other Cats after every Battle, succeeded so well, that they left not one Rat alive, notwithstanding the great number of them in the place.

ON the East-side the Village *Rowdil*, there is a Circle of Stone, within 8 Yards of the Shore;

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38 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

Shore: it's about 3 fathom under Water, and about two stories high; it is in form broader above than below, like to the lower story of a Kiln: I saw it perfectly on one side, but the Season being then windy, hinder'd me from a full view of it. The Natives say that there is such another Circle of less compass in the Pool *Borodil*, on the other side the Bay.

THE Shore on the West Coast of this Island affords variety of curious Shells and Walks; as *Tellina* and *Turbines* of various kinds; thin *Patella*, streaked blue, various colour'd; *Pecten*es, some blue, and some of Orange Colours.

THE *Os-Sepie* is found on the Sand in great quantities. The Natives pulverize it, and take a Dose of it in boil'd Milk, which is found by experience to be an effectual Remedy against the Diarrhea and Dysentery. They rub this Powder likewise, to take off the Film on the Eyes of Sheep.

THERE is variety of Nuts, call'd *Molluka* Beans, some of which are used as Amulets against Witchcraft, or an evil Eye, particularly the white one; and upon this account they are wore about Childrens Necks, and if any Evil is intended to them, they say the Nut changes into a black colour. That they did change colour, I found true by my own obser-

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 39

observation, but cannot be positive as to the Cause of it.

*MALCOM Campbell*, Steward of *Harries*, told me, that some Weeks before my arrival there, all his Cows gave Blood instead of Milk, for several days together: one of the Neighbours told his Wife that this must be Witchcraft, and it would be easy to remove it, if she would but take the white Nut, call'd the *Virgin Mary's Nut*, and lay it in the Pail into which she was to milk the Cows. This Advice she presently follow'd, and having milk'd one Cow into the Pail with the Nut in it, the Milk was all Blood, and the Nut chang'd its colour into dark brown: she used the Nut again, and all the Cows gave pure good Milk, which they ascribe to the Virtue of the Nut. This very Nut *Mr. Campbell* presented me with, and I keep it still by me.

SOME small quantity of *Ambergrease* hath been found on the Coast of the Island *Bernera*. I was told that a Weaver in this Island had burnt a lump of it, to show him a Light for the most part of the Night, but the strong Scent of it made his Head ache exceedingly, by which it was discover'd.

AN antient Woman, about sixty Years of age, here lost her Hearing; and having no Physician to give her Advice, she would needs

40 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

try an experiment her self, which was thus : She took a Quill with which she ordinarily snused her Tobacco, and filling it with the Powder of Tobacco, pour'd it into her Ear ; which had the desir'd effect, for she could hear perfectly well next day. Another Neighbour about the same Age, having lost her Hearing some time after, recover'd it by the same Experiment, as I was told by the Natives.

THE Sheep which feed here on sandy Ground, become blind sometimes, and are cur'd by rubbing Chalk in their Eyes.

A SERVANT of Sir *Normond Mackleod's*, living in the Island of *Berneria*, had a Mare that brought forth a Fole with both the hinder Feet cloven, which died about a Year after : the Natives concluded that it was a bad Omen to the Owner, and his Death, which follow'd in a few Years after, confirm'd them in their Opinion.

THE Natives make use of the Seeds of a white wild Carrot, instead of Hops, for brewing their Beer ; and they say that it answers the end sufficiently well, and gives the Drink a good Relish besides.

JOHN CAMPBELL, Forester of *Harries*, makes use of this singular Remedy for a

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 41

a Cold : He walks into the Sea up to the middle with his Clothes on, and immediately after goes to bed in his wet Clothes, and then laying the Bed-clothes over him, procures a Sweat, which removes the Distemper ; and this he told me is his only Remedy for all manner of Colds. One of the said *John Campbell's* Servants having his Cheek swell'd, and there being no Physician near, he ask'd his Master's Advice : he knew nothing proper for him, but however bid him apply a Plaister of warm Barley-Dough to the place affected. This assuaged the Swelling, and drew out of the Flesh a little Worm, about half an inch in length, and about the bigness of a Goose-quill, having a pointed Head, and many little Feet on each side : this Worm they call *Fillan*, and it hath been found in the Head and Neck of several Persons that I have seen in the Isle of *Skie*.

*ALLIUM Latifolium*, a kind of wild *Garlick*, is much used by some of the Natives, as a Remedy against the Stone : they boil it in Water, and drink the Infusion, and it expels Sand powerfully with great ease.

THE Natives told me, that the Rock on the East-side of *Harries*, in the Sound of Island *Glass*, hath a Vacuity near the Front, on the Northwest side of the Sound ; in which they say there is a Stone that they call the *Lunar-Stone*, which advances and retires according to the Increase and Decrease of the Moon.

## 42 A DESCRIPTION of the

A POOR Man born in the Village *Rowdil*, commonly call'd *St. Clements-blind*, lost his Sight at every Change of the Moon, which oblig'd him to keep his bed for a day or two, and then he recover'd his Sight.

THE inferiour Islands belonging to *Harries*, are as follow: The Island *Bernera* is five miles in Circumference, and lies about two Leagues to the South of *Harries*. The Soil is sandy for the most part, and yields a great Product of Barley and Rye in a plentiful Year, especially if the Ground be enrich'd by Sea-ware, and that there be Rain enough to satisfy the dry Soil. I had the opportunity to travel this Island several times, and upon a strict enquiry I found the Product of Barley to be sometimes twenty fold and upwards, and at that time all the East-side of the Island produc'd thirty fold. This hath been confirm'd to me by the Natives, particularly by Sir *Normond Mackleod*, who possesses the Island: he likewise confirm'd to me the account given by all the Natives of *Harries* and *South-Vist*, viz. that one Barley-Grain produceth in some places 7, 10, 12, and 14 Ears of Barley; of which he himself being diffident for some time, was at the pains to search nicely the Root of one Grain after some Weeks growth, and found that from this one Grain many Ears had been grown up. But this happens not, except

## Western Islands of Scotland. 43

cept when the Season is very favourable, or in Grounds that have not been cultivated some Years before; which if manur'd with *Sea-ware*, seldom fail to produce an extraordinary Crop. It is observ'd in this Island, as elsewhere, that when the Ground is dug up with Spades, and the Turfs turn'd upside down, and cover'd with *Sea-ware*, it yields a better Product than when it is plow'd.

THERE is a fresh-water Lake in this Island, call'd *Loch-Bruist*, in which there are small Islands abounding with Land and Sea-Fowl, which build there in the Summer. There is likewise plenty of Eels in this Lake, which are easiest caught in *September*; and then the Natives carry Lights with them in the Night-time to the Rivulet running from the Lake, in which the Eels fall down to the Sea in heaps together.

THIS Island in the Summer is cover'd all over with Clover and Dasy, except in the Corn-fields. There is to be seen about the Houses of *Bernera*, for the space of a mile, a soft Substance, in shew and colour exactly resembling the Sea-plant, call'd *Slake*, and grows very thick among the Grass. The Natives say, that it is the Product of a dry hot Soil; it grows likewise in the tops of several Hills in the Island of *Harries*.

IT'S

44 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

IT'S proper to add here an Account of several strange Irregularities in the Tides, on *Berneræ Coast*, by *Sir Robert Murray*, mention'd in the *Phil. Transactions*.

THE Tides increase and decrease gradually, according to the Moon's Age, so as about the third day after the new and full Moon, in the *Western Isles and Continent* they are commonly at the highest, and about the Quarter Moons at the lowest: (the former call'd Spring-Tides, the other Neap-Tides.) The Tides from the Quarter to the highest Spring-Tide increase in a certain proportion, and from the Spring-Tide to the Quarter-Tide in like proportion: and the Ebbs rise and fall always after the same manner.

IT'S suppos'd that the Increase of Tides is made in the proportion of Sines: the first Increase exceeds the lowest in a small proportion, the next in a greater, the third greater than that, and so on to the middle-most, whereof the Excess is the greatest; diminishing again from that to the highest Spring-Tide, so as the Proportions before and after the middle, do answer one another. And likewise from the highest Spring-Tide to the lowest Neap-Tide, the Decreases seem to keep the like proportions: And this commonly falls out when no Wind, or other Accident causes an alteration. At the  
beginning

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 45

beginning of each Flood on the Coast, the Tide moves faster, but in a small degree, increasing its Swiftnes till towards the middle of the Flood; and then decreasing in Swiftnes again from the middle to the top of the High-water: it's suppos'd that the unequal Spaces of Time, the Increase and Decrease of Swiftnes, and consequently the degrees of the Risings and Fallings of the same unequal Spaces of Time, are perform'd according to the proportion of Sines. The proportion cannot hold precisely and exactly in regard of the Inequalities that fall out in the Periods of the Tides, which are believ'd to follow certain Positions of the Moon in regard of the Equinox, which are known not to keep a precise constant Course: so that there not being equal Portions of Time between one new Moon and another, the Moon's Return to the same Meridian cannot be always perform'd in the same time. And the Tides from new Moon being not always the same in number, or sometimes but 57, sometimes 58, sometimes 59, (without any certain Order or Succession) is another Evidence of the difficulty of reducing this to any great Exactness.

AT the East end of this Isle, there is a strange Reciprocation of the Flux and Reflux of the Sea. There is another no less remarkable upon the West side of the Long Island: the Tides which come from the South-west, run  
along



46 A DESCRIPTION of the

along the Coast Northward; so that during the ordinary Course of the Tides, the Flood runs East in the *Frith*, where *Berneray* lies, and the Ebb West: and thus the Sea ebbs and flows orderly, some four days before the Full and Change, and as long after; (the ordinary Spring-Tides rising some 14 or 15 foot upright, and all the rest proportionably, as in other places) but afterwards, for four days before the Quarter Moons, and as long after, there is constantly a great and singular Variation. For then (a Southerly Moon making there the full Sea) the Course of the Tide being Eastward, when it begins to flow, which is about 9 1/2 of the clock, it not only continues so about 3 1/2 in the Afternoon, that it be High-water; but after it begins to ebb, the Current runs on still Eastward during the whole Ebb: so that it runs Eastward 12 hours together, that is, all day long, from about 9 1/2 in the Morning till about 9 1/2 at Night. But then when the Night-Tide begins to flow, the Current turns, and runs Westward all Night, during both Flood and Ebb, for some 12 hours more, as it did Eastward the day before. And thus the Reciprocations continue, one Flood and Ebb running 12 hours Eastward, and another 12 hours Westward, till 4 days before the Full and New Moon; and then they resume their ordinary regular Course as before, running East during the six hours of Flood, and West during the six of Ebb.

THERE

Western Islands of Scotland. 47

THERE is another extraordinary Irregularity in the Tides, which never fail: That whereas between the Vernal and Autumnal Equinox, that is, for six Months together, the Course of irregular Tides about the Quarter Moons, is to run all day, 12 hours, as from about 9 1/2 to 9 1/2 or 10, exact Eastward; all night, that is, 12 hours more, Westward: during the other six Months, from the Autumnal to the Vernal Equinox, the Current runs all day Westward, and all night Eastward. I have observ'd the Tides as above, for the space of some days both in *April, May, July, and August*. The Natives have frequent opportunities to see this both day and night, and they all agree that the Tides run as mention'd above.

THERE's a Couple of Ravens in this Island, which beat away all ravenous Fowls, and when their Young are able to fly abroad, they beat them also out of the Island, but not without many blows, and a great noise.

THERE are two Chappels in this Isle, to wit, *St. Asaph's* and *St. Columbus's* Chappel. There is a Stone erected near the former, which is eight foot high, and two foot thick.

ABOUT half a League from *Berneray*, to the Westward, lies the Island *Pabbay*, 3 miles in Circumference, and having a Mountain in the middle. The Soil is sandy, and fruitful

## 48 A DESCRIPTION of the

ful in Corn and Grass, and the Natives have lately discover'd here a white Marble. The West end of this Island, which looks to *St. Kilda*, is call'd the Wooden Harbour, because the Sands at Low-Water discover several Trees that have formerly grown there. Sir *Normond Mackleod* told me, that he had seen a Tree cut there, which was afterwards made into a Harrow.

THERE are two Chappels in this Island, one of which is dedicated to the Virgin *Mary*, the other to *St. Muluag*.

THE Steward of *Kilda*, who lives in *Pabbay*, is accustom'd in time of a Storm to tie a bundle of Puddings, made of the Fat of Sea-Fowl, to the end of his Cable, and lets it fall into the Sea behind the Rudder: this, he says, hinders the Waves from breaking, and calms the Sea; but the Scent of the Grease attracts the Whales, which put the Vessel in danger.

ABOUT half a League to the North of *Pabbay*, lies the Isle *Sellay*, a Mile in Circumference, that yields extraordinary Pasturage for Sheep, so that they become fat very soon; they have the biggest Horns that ever I saw on Sheep.

ABOUT a League farther to the North, lies the Isle *Taransay*, very fruitful in Corn and Grass,

## Western Islands of Scotland. 49

Grass, and yields much yellow Talk. It is 3 Miles in Circumference, and has two Chappels, one dedicated to *St. Tarran*, the other to *St. Keith*.

THERE is an antient Tradition among the Natives here, that a Man must not be bury'd in *St. Tarran's*, nor a Woman in *St. Keith's*, because otherwise the Corps would be found above-ground the day after it is interred. I told them this was a most ridiculous Fancy, which they might soon perceive by experience, if they would but put it to a tryal. *Roderick Campbell*, who resides there, being of my opinion, resolv'd to embrace the first opportunity that offer'd, in order to undeceive the credulous Vulgar; and accordingly a poor Man in this Island, who died a Year after, was bury'd in *St. Tarran's* Chappel, contrary to the antient Custom and Tradition of this place, but his Corps is still in the Grave, from whence it is not like to rise until the general Resurrection. This Instance has deliver'd the credulous Natives from this unreasonable Fancy. This Island is a mile distant from the main Land of *Harries*, and when the Inhabitants go from this Island to *Harries* with a design to stay for any time, they agree with those that carry them over, on a particular motion of walking upon a certain piece of Ground, unknown to every body but themselves, as a Signal to bring 'em back.

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THREE

THREE Leagues to the Westward of this Island, lies *Gasker*, about half a mile in Circumference: it excels any other Plot of its extent, for Fruitfulness in Grass and Product of Milk; it maintains 8 or 10 Cows. The Natives kill Seals here, which are very big.

ABOUT two Leagues farther North lies the Island *Scarp*, two miles in Circumference, and is a high Land cover'd with Heath and Grass.

BETWEEN *Berneria* and the main Land of *Harries* lies the Island *Ensay*, which is above two miles in Circumference, and for the most part arable Ground, which is fruitful in Corn and Grass: there is an old Chappel here, for the use of the Natives; and there was lately discover'd a Grave in the West end of the Island, in which was found a pair of Scales made of Brass, and a little Hammer, both which were finely polish'd.

BETWEEN *Ensay* and the main Land of *Harries*, lie several small Islands, fitter for Pasturage than Cultivation.

THE little Island *Quedam* hath a Vein of Adamant Stone, in the front of the Rock. The Natives say that Mice don't live in this Island, and when they chance to be carry'd thither  
among

among Corn, they die quickly after. Without these small Islands, there is a Tract of small Isles in the same Line with the East side of the *Harries* and *North-Vist*: they are in all respects of the same nature with those two Islands, so that the sight of them is apt to dispose one to think that they have been once united together.

THE most Southerly of these Islands, and the nearest to *North-Vist* is *Hermetra*, two miles in Circumference: it is a moorish Soil, cover'd all over almost with Heath, except here and there a few Piles of Grass, and the Plant Milk-wort; yet notwithstanding this disadvantage, it is certainly the best Spot of its extent, for Pasturage, among these Isles, and affords great plenty of Milk in *January* and *February* beyond what can be seen in the other Islands.

I SAW here the Foundation of a House built by the *English*, in *K. Charles* the First's time, for one of their Magazines to lay up the Cask, Salt, &c. for carrying on the Fishery, which was then begun in the Western Islands; but this Design miscarry'd because of the Civil Wars, which then broke out.

THE Channel between *Harries* and *North-Vist*, is above three Leagues in breadth, and abounds with Rocks, as well under as above Water: tho at the same time Vessels of 300  
D 2 Tuns

## 52 A DESCRIPTION of the

Tuns have gone through it, from East to West, having the advantage of one of the Natives for a Pilot. Some 16 Years ago, one Captain *Frost* was safely conducted in this manner. The *Harries* belongs in Property to the Laird of *Mackleod*: he and all the Inhabitants are Protestants, and observe the Festivals of *Christmas*, *Good-Friday*, and *St. Michael's Day*; upon the latter, they rendezvous on horse-back, and make their Cavalcade on the Sands at low Water.

THE Island of *North-Vist* lies about three Leagues to the South of the Island of *Harries*, being in form of a Semicircle, the Diameter of which looks to the East, and is mountainous and full of Heath, and fitter for Pasturage than Cultivation. The West side is of a quite different Soil, arable and plain: the whole is in length from South to North nine miles, and about thirty in Circumference.

THERE are four Mountains in the middle, two lie within less than a mile of each other, and are call'd *South* and *North-Lee*. All the Hills and Heath afford good Pasturage, tho it consists as much of Heath as Grass. The arable Ground hath a mixture of Clay in some places, and it is cover'd all over in Summer-time and Harvest with Clover, Dasy, and variety of other Plants, pleasant to the Sight, and of a very fragrant Smell; and abounds with

## Western Islands of Scotland. 53

with black Cattle and Sheep. The Soil is very grateful to the Husbandman, yielding a Produce of Barley, from ten to thirty fold in a plentiful Year; provided the Ground be manur'd with Sea-ware, and that it have Rain proportionable to the Soil. I have upon several occasions enquir'd concerning the Produce of Barley, in this and the neighbouring Islands; the same being much doubted in the South of *Scotland*, as well as in *England*: and upon the whole, I have been assur'd by the most antient and industrious of the Natives, that the Increase is the same as mention'd before in *Harries*.

THEY told me likewise, that a Plot of Ground which hath lain unmanur'd for some Years, would in a plentiful season produce fourteen Ears of Barley from one Grain; and several Ridges were then shew'd me of this extraordinary Growth in different places. The Grain sown here is Barley, Oats, Rye; and it's not to be doubted but the Soil would also produce Wheat. The way of Tillage here is commonly by ploughing, and some by digging. The ordinary Plough is drawn by four Horses, and they have a little Plough also call'd *Riffle*, *i. e.* a thing that cleaves, the Culter of which is in form of a Sickle; and it is drawn sometimes by one, and sometimes by two Horses, according as the Ground is. The Design of this little Plough is to draw a deep Line in



## 54 A DESCRIPTION of the

the Ground, to make it the more easy for the big Plough to follow, which otherwise would be much retarded by the strong Roots of Bent lying deep in the Ground, that are cut by the little Plough. When they dig with Spades, it produceth more Increase: the little Plough is likewise used to facilitate digging as well as ploughing. They continue to manure the Ground until the tenth of June, if they have plenty of *Braggir*, i. e. the broad Leaves growing on the top of the *Alga-Marina*.

ABOUT a League and a half to the South of the Island *Hermetra* in *Harries*, lies *Loch-Maddy*, so call'd from the three Rocks without the Entry on the South side. They are call'd *Maddies*, from the great quantity of big Muscles, call'd *Maddies*, that grows upon them. This Harbour is capacious enough for some hundreds of Vessels of any Burden: it hath several Isles within it, and they contribute to the Security of the Harbour, for a Vessel may safely come close to the Key. The Seamen divide the Harbour in two parts, calling the South side *Loch-Maddy*, and the North side *Loch-Partan*. There is one Island in the South *Loch*, which for its Commodiousness is by the *English* call'd *Nonsuch*. This *Loch* hath been famous for the great quantity of Herrings yearly taken in it within these fifty Years last past. The Natives told me, that in the memory of some yet alive, there had been 400  
Sail

## Western Islands of Scotland. 55

Sail loaded in it with Herrings at one Season; but it is not now frequented for Fishing, tho the Herrings do still abound in it: and on this Coast every Summer and Harvest, the Natives sit angling on the Rocks, and as they pull up their Hooks, do many times bring up Herrings. That they are always on the Coast, appears from the Birds, Whales, and other Fishes, that are their Forerunners every where; and yet it is strange, that in all this Island there is not one Herring-Net to be had: but if the Natives saw any Encouragement, they could soon provide 'em. Cod, Ling, and all sorts of Fish taken in these Islands, abound in and about this Lake.

IN this Harbour there is a small Island call'd *Vacksay*, in which there is still to be seen the Foundation of a House, built by the *English*, for a Magazine to keep their Cask, Salt, &c. for carrying on a great Fishery which was then begun there. The Natives told me, that King *Charles* the First had a share in it. This Lake, with the Convenience of its Fishings and Islands, is certainly capable of great Improvement: much of the Ground about the Bay is capable of Cultivation, and affords a great deal of Fuel, as Turff, Peats, and plenty of fresh Water. It also affords a good quantity of Oysters, and Clam-shell-fish; the former grow on Rocks, and are so big that they are cut in four pieces before they are eat.



ABOUT half a mile further South is *Loch-Eport*, having a Rock without the Mouth of the Entry, which is narrow: the Lake penetrates some miles towards the West, and is a good Harbour, having several small Isles within it. The Seals are very numerous here. In the Month of *July* the Spring-Tides carry in a great quantity of Mackrel; and at the return of the Water they are found many times lying on the Rocks. The vulgar Natives make use of the Ashes of burnt Sea-ware, which preserves them for some time instead of Salt.

ABOUT two miles to the South of *Loch-Eport* lies the Bay call'd the *Kyle of Rona*; having the Island of that name (which is a little Hill) within the Bay: there is a Harbour on each side of it. This Place hath been found of great convenience for the fishing of Cod and Ling, which abound on this Coast. There is a little Chappel in the Island *Rona*, call'd the *Low-landers* Chappel, because Seamen who die in time of fishing, are bury'd in that place.

THERE is a Harbour on the South side the Island *Borerà*; the Entry seems to be narrower than really it is: the Island and the opposite Point of Land appear like two little Promontories off at Sea. Some Vessels have been forc'd in there by Storm, as was Captain *Peters*

*Peters* a Dutch Man, and after him an *English* Ship, who both approv'd of this Harbour. The former built a Cock-boat there on a Sunday, at which the Natives were much offended: The latter having landed in the Island, happen'd to come into a House where he found only ten Women, and they were employ'd (as he suppos'd) in a strange manner, *viz.* their Arms and Legs were bare, being five on a side; and between them lay a Board, upon which they had laid a piece of Cloth, and were thickning of it with their Hands and Feet, and singing all the while. The *English*-man presently concluded it to be a little *Bedlam*, which he did not expect in so remote a Corner: and this he told to Mr. *John Macklean*, who possesses the Island. Mr. *Macklean* answer'd, he never saw any mad People in those Islands: but this would not satisfy him, till they both went to the place where the Women were at work; and then Mr. *Macklean* having told him, that it was their common way of thickning Cloth, he was convinc'd, tho surpriz'd at the manner of it.

THERE is such a number of fresh-water Lakes here, as can hardly be believ'd: I myself and several others endeavour'd to number them, but in vain, for they are so dispos'd into turnings, that it is impracticable. They are generally well stock'd with Trouts and Eels, and some of 'em with Salmon; and which is yet

58 A DESCRIPTION of the

yet more strange, Cod, Ling, Mackrel, &c. are taken in these Lakes, into which they are brought by the Spring-Tides.

THESE Lakes have many small Islands, which in Summer abound with variety of Land and Sea-Fowls, that build and hatch there. There be also several Rivers here, which afford Salmon: one sort of them is very singular, that is call'd Marled Salmon, or, as the Natives call it, *Ieskdrumin*, being lesser than the ordinary Salmon, and full of strong large Scales; no Bait can allure it, and a Shadow frights it away, being the wildest of Fishes: it leaps high above water, and delights to be in the Surface of it.

THERE's great plenty of Shell-fish round this Island, more particularly Cockles: the Islands do also afford many small Fish call'd Eels, of a whitish colour; they are picked out of the Sand with a small crooked Iron made on purpose. There is plenty of Lobsters on the West side of this Island, and one sort bigger than the rest, having the Toe shorter and broader.

THERE are several antient Forts in this Island, built upon Eminences, or in the middle of fresh-water Lakes.

HERE are likewise several Kairns or Heaps of Stones; the biggest I observ'd was on a Hill near to *Loch-Eporia*. There are three Stones erected

Western Islands of Scotland. 59

erected about five foot high, at the distance of a quarter of a mile from one another, on Eminences about a mile from *Loch-Maddy*, to amuse Invaders; for which reason they are still call'd false Sentinels.

THERE is a Stone of 24 foot long and 4 in breadth in the Hill *Crinveal*: the Natives say, a Giant of a Month old was bury'd under it. There is a very conspicuous Stone in the face of the Hill above *St. Peter's Village*, above eight foot high.

THERE is another about eight foot high at *Down-rossel*, which the Natives call a Cross. There are two broad Stones about eight foot high, on the Hill two miles to the South of *Valay*.

THERE is another at the Key, opposite to *Kirkibast*, 12 foot high: the Natives say that Delinquents were ty'd to this Stone in time of Divine Service.

THERE is a Stone in form of a Cross in the Row, opposite to *St. Mary's Church*, about 5 foot high: the Natives call it the Water-Cross, for the antient Inhabitants had a Custom of erecting this sort of Cross to procure Rain, and when they had got enough, they laid it flat on the ground, but this Custom is now disused. The inferiour Island is the Island of *Heiskir*, which

60 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

which lies near three Leagues Westward of *North-Vist*, is three miles in Circumference, of a sandy Soil, and very fruitful in Corn and Grass, and black Cattle. The Inhabitants labour under want of Fuel of all sorts, which obliges them to burn Cows-Dung, Barley-straw, and dry'd Sea-ware: the Natives told me, that Bread baked by the Fuel of Sea-ware, relishes better than that done otherwise. They are accustomed to salt their Cheese with the Ashes of Barley-straw, which they suffer not to lie on it above 12 hours time, because otherwise it would spoil it. There was a Stone-Chest lately discover'd here, having an earthen Pitcher in it which was full of Bones, and as soon as touch'd they turn'd to Dust.

THERE are two small Islands separated by narrow Channels from the Northwest of this Island, and are of the same Mould with the big Island. The Natives say, that there is a Couple of Ravens there, which suffer no other of their Kind to approach this Island, and if any such chance to come, this Couple immediately drive them away, with such a noise as is heard by all the Inhabitants: they are observ'd likewise to beat away their Young as soon as they be able to purchase for themselves. The Natives told me, that when one of this Couple happen'd to be wounded by Gun-shot, it lay still in the corner of a Rock for a week or two, during which time its Mate brought Provision to  
it

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 61

it daily, until it recover'd perfectly. The Natives add further, that one of these two Ravens having died some time after, the surviving one abandon'd the Island for a few days, and then was seen to return with about ten or twelve more of its kind, and having chosen a Mate out of this number, all the rest went quite off, leaving these two in possession of their little Kingdom. They do by a certain Sagacity discover to the Inhabitants any Carcase, on the Shore or in the Fields, whereof I have seen several Instances: the Inhabitants pretend to know by their noise, whether it be Flesh or Fish. I told them, this was such a Nicety that I could scarcely give it credit; but they answer'd me, that they came to the knowledg of it by Observation, and that they make their loudest noise for Flesh. There is a narrow Channel between the Island of *Heisker* and one of the lesser Islands, in which the Natives formerly kill'd many Seals, in this manner: They twisted together several small Ropes of Horse-hair in form of a Net, contracted at one end like a Purse; and so by opening and shutting this Hair-Net, these Seals were catch'd in the narrow Channel. On the South side of *North-Vist* are the Islands of *Illeray*, which are accessible at low Water; each of them being three miles in compass, and very fertile in Corn and Cattle.

ON the Western Coast of this Island lies the Rock *Eousmil*, about a quarter of a mile  
in

62 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

in Circumference, and it is still famous for the yearly fishing of Seals there, in the end of *October*. This Rock belongs to the Farmers of the next adjacent Lands: there is one who furnisheth a Boat, to whom there is a particular share due on that account, besides his Proportion as Tenant. The Parish-Minister hath his choice of all the young Seals, and that which he takes is call'd by the Natives, *Cullen-Mory*, that is, the *Virgin Mary's Seal*. The Steward of the Island hath one paid to him, his Officer hath another, and this by virtue of their Offices. These Farmers man their Boat with a competent number fit for the business, and they always imbark with a contrary Wind, for their security against being driven away by the Ocean, and likewise to prevent them from being discover'd by the Seals, who are apt to smell the Scent of them, and presently run to Sea.

WHEN this Crew is quietly landed, they surround the Passes, and then the Signal for the general Attack is given from the Boat, and so they beat them down with big Staves. The Seals at this Onset make towards the Sea with all speed, and often force their Passage over the necks of the stoutest Assailants, who aim always at the Forehead of the Seals, giving many blows before they be kill'd; and if they be not hit exactly on the front, they contract a Lump on their Forehead, which makes them look very fierce; and if they get hold of the Staff with their

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 63

their Teeth, they carry it along to Sea with them. Those that are in the Boat shoot at them as they run to Sea, but few are catch'd that way. The Natives told me, that several of the biggest Seals lose their Lives by endeavouring to save their young ones, whom they tumble before them towards the Sea. I was told also, that 320 Seals, young and old, have been kill'd at one time in this place. The reason of attacking 'em in *October*, is, because in the beginning of this Month the Seals bring forth their Young on the Ocean side; but these on the East side, who are of the lesser stature, bring forth their Young in the middle of *June*.

THE Seals eat no Fish till they first take off the Skin: they hold the Head of the Fish between their Teeth, and pluck the Skin off each side with their sharp-pointed Nails; this I observ'd several times. The Natives told me, that the Seals are regularly coupled, and resent an Encroachment on their Mates at an extraordinary rate: The Natives have observ'd, that when a Male had invaded a Female, already coupled to another, the injur'd Male, upon its Return to its Mate, would by a strange Sagacity find it out, and resent it against the Aggressor by a bloody Conflict, which gives a red Tincture to the Sea in that part where they fight. This piece of Revenge has been often observ'd by Seal-Hunters, and many others of

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## 64 A DESCRIPTION of the

unquestionable Integrity, whose Occasions oblig'd them to be much on this Coast. I was assur'd by good hands, that the Seals make their Addresses to each other by Kisses: this hath been observ'd often by Men and Women, as fishing on the Coast in a clear Day. The Female puts away its Young from sucking, as soon as it is able to provide for it self; and this is not done without many severe Blows.

THERE is a Hole in the Skin of the Female, within which the Teats are secured from being hurt, as it creeps along the Rocks and Stones; for which cause, Nature hath form'd the Point of the Tongue of the young one cloven, without which it could not suck.

THE Natives salt the Seals with the Ashes of burnt Sea-ware, and say they are good Food: the Vulgar eat them commonly in the Spring-time with a long pointed Stick instead of a Fork, to prevent the strong Smell which their hands would otherwise have for several hours after. The Flesh and Broth of fresh young Seals is by experience known to be pectoral; the Meat is astringent, and used as an effectual Remedy against the Diarrhea and Dysentery: the Liver of a Seal being dry'd and pulveriz'd, and afterwards a little of it drunk with Milk, *Aquavita*, or red Wine, is also good against Fluxes.

SOME

## Western Islands of Scotland. 65

SOME of the Natives wear a Girdle of the Seal-Skin about the middle, for removing the Sciatica, as those of the Shire of *Aberdeen* wear it to remove the Chin-cough. This four-footed Creature is reckon'd one of the swiftest in the Sea; they say likewise, that it leaps in cold Weather the height of a Pike above water, and that the Skin of it is white in Summer, and darker in Winter; and that their Hair stands on end with the Flood, and falls again at the Ebb. The Skin is by the Natives cut in long pieces, and then made use of instead of Ropes to fix the Plough to their Horses, when they till the Ground.

THE Seal, tho esteem'd fit only for the Vulgar, is also eaten by Persons of Distinction, tho under a different Name, to wit, *Hamm*: this I have been assur'd of by good hands, and thus we see that the generality of Men are as much led by Fancy as Judgment in their Palates, as well as in other things. The Popish Vulgar, in the Islands Southward from this, eat these Seals in *Lent* instead of Fish. This occasion'd a Debate between a Protestant Gentleman and a Papist of my Acquaintance: the former alledg'd that the other had transgress'd the Rules of his Church, by eating Flesh in *Lent*: the latter answer'd, that he did not; for, says he, I have eat a Sea-Creature, which only lives and feeds upon Fish. The Protestant re-

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ply'd,



## 66 A DESCRIPTION of the

ply'd, that this Creature is amphibious, lies, creeps, eats, sleeps, and so spends much of its time on Land, which no Fish can do and live. It hath also another Faculty that no Fish has, that is, it breaks Wind backward so loudly, that one may hear it at a great distance. But the Papist still maintain'd that he must believe it to be Fish, till such time as the Pope and his Priests decide the question.

ABOUT three Leagues and a half to the West, lie the small Islands call'd *Hawsker-Rocks*, and *Hawsker-Eggath*, and *Hawsker-Nimannich*, *id est*, *Monks-Rock*, which hath an Altar in it. The first call'd so from the Ocean, as being near to it; for *Haw* or *Thau* in the antient Language signifies the Ocean: the more Southerly Rocks are six or seven big ones nicked or indented, for *Eggath* signifies so much. The largest Island, which is Northward, is near half a mile in Circumference, and it is covered with long Grass. Only small Vessels can pass between this and the Southern Rocks, being nearest to *St. Kilda* of all the West Islands: both of 'em abound with Fowls as much as any Isles of their extent in *St. Kilda*. The Coulterneb, Guillemot, and Scarts, are most numerous here; the Seals likewise abound very much in and about these Rocks.

THE Island of *Valay* lies on the West, near the main Land of *North-Vist*; it is about four miles

## Western Islands of Scotland. 67

miles in Circumference, arable and a dry sandy Soil, very fruitful in Corn and Grass, Clover and Dasy. It hath three Chappels; one dedicated to *St. Ulton*, and another to the *Virgin Mary*. There are two Crosses of Stone, each of them about 7 foot high, and a foot and a half broad.

THERE is a little Font on an Altar, being a big Stone, round like a Cannon-Ball, and having in the upper end a little Vacuity capable of two Spoonfuls of Water. Below the Chappels there is a flat thin Stone, call'd *Brownies Stone*, upon which the antient Inhabitants offer'd a Cow's Milk every Sunday; but this Custom is now quite abolish'd. Some thirty paces on this side, is to be seen a little stone House under ground; it is very low and long, having an Entry on the Sea-side: I saw an Entry in the middle of it, which was discover'd by the falling of the Stones and Earth.

ABOUT a League to the North-east of *Valay* is the Island of *Borera*, about four miles in Circumference: the Mould in some places is sandy, and in others black Earth; it is very fruitful in Cattle and Grass. I saw a Mare here, which I was told brought forth a Fole in her second Year.

THERE is a Cow here that brought forth two Female Calves at once, in all things so very

## 68 A DESCRIPTION of the

like one another, that they could not be distinguish'd by any outward Mark; and had such a Sympathy, that they were never separate, except in time of sucking, and then they kept still their own side of their Dam, which was not observ'd until a distinguishing Mark was put about one of their Necks by the Milk-maid. In the middle of this Island there's a fresh-water Lake, well stock'd with very big Eels, some of them as long as Cod or Ling-Fish. There is a Passage under the stony Ground, which is between the Sea and the Lake, thro which it's suppos'd the Eels come in with the Spring-Tides: one of the Inhabitants call'd *Mack-Vanich*, i. e. *Monks-Son*, had the curiosity to creep naked thro this Passage.

THIS Island affords the largest and best Dulse for eating; it requires less Butter than any other of this sort, and has a mellowish Taste.

THE Burial-place near the Houses is call'd the Monks-Field, for all the Monks that died in the Islands that lie Northward from *Egg*, were bury'd in this little Plot: each Grave hath a Stone at both ends, some of which are 3, and others 4 foot high. There are big Stones without the Burial-place even with the Ground; several of them have little Vacuities in them as if made by Art: the Tradition is, that these Vacuities were dug for receiving the Monks Knees, when they pray'd upon 'em.

THE

## Western Islands of Scotland. 69

THE Island *Lingay* lies half a League South on the side of *Borera*: it is singular in respect of all the Lands of *Vist*, and the other Islands that surround it, for they are all compos'd of Sand, and this on the contrary is altogether Moss cover'd with Heath, affording five Peats in depth; and is very serviceable and useful, furnishing the Island *Borera*, &c. with plenty of good Fuel. This Island was held as consecrated for several Ages, infomuch that the Natives would not then presume to cut any Fuel in it.

THE Cattle produc'd here, are Horses, Cows, Sheep and Hogs, generally of a low stature. The Horses are very strong, and fit for Pads, tho expos'd to the Rigour of the Weather all the Winter and Spring in the open Fields. Their Cows are also in the Fields all the Spring, and their Beef is sweet and tender as any can be: they live upon Sea-ware in the Winter and Spring, and are fatned by it, nor are they slaughter'd before they eat plentifully of it in *December*. The Natives are accusom'd to salt their Beef in a Cow's Hide, which keeps it close from Air, and preserves it as well, if not better, than Barrels, and tastes they say best when this way used. This Beef is transported to *Glasgow*, a City in the West of *Scotland*, and from thence (being put into Barrels there) exported to the *Indies* in good condition. The

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Hills

70 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

Hills afford some hundreds of Deer, who eat Sea-ware also in Winter and Spring-time.

THE *Amphibia* produc'd here are Seals and Otters. There is no Fox or venomous Creature in this Island. The great Eagles here fasten their Tallons in the back of Fish, and commonly of Salmon, which is often above water and in the surface. The Natives, who in the Summer-time live on the Coast, do sometimes rob the Eagle of its Prey after its landing.

HERE are Hawks, Eagles, Pheasants, Moor-Fowls, Tarmogan, Plover, Pigeons, Crows, Swans, and all the ordinary Sea-Fowls in the West Islands. The Eagles are very destructive to the Fawns and Lambs, especially the black Eagle, which is of a lesser size than the other. The Natives observe, that it fixes its Tallons between the Deers Horns, and beats its Wings constantly about its Eyes; which puts the Deer to run continually till it fall into a Ditch, or over a Precipice, where it dies, and so becomes a Prey to this cunning Hunter. There are at the same time several other Eagles of this kind, which fly on both sides of the Deer; which fright it extremely, and contribute much to its more sudden Destruction.

THE Forester and several of the Natives assur'd me, that they had seen both sorts of  
Eagles

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 71

Eagles kill Deer in this manner. The Swans come hither in great numbers in the Month of *October*, with North-East Winds, and live in the fresh Lakes, where they feed upon Trout and Water-Plants till *March*, at which time they fly away again with a South-East Wind. When the Natives kill a Swan, it is common for the Eaters of it to make a Negative Vow (*i. e.* they swear never to do something that is in it self impracticable) before they taste of the Fowl.

THE Bird *Corn-Craker* is about the bigness of a Pigeon, having a longer Neck, and being of a brown Colour, but blacker in Harvest than in Summer: the Natives say it lives by the Water, and under the Ice in Winter and Spring.

THE *Cokk* is a Fowl somewhat less than a Goose, hath Feathers of divers colours, as white, grey, green, and black, and is beautiful to the Eye: it hath a Tuft on the Crown of its Head like that of a Peacock, and a Train longer than that of a House-Cock. This Fowl loseth its Feathers in time of hatching, and lives mostly in the remotest Islands, as *Heisker* and *Rona*.

THE *Gawlin* is a Fowl less than a Duck, it is reckon'd a true Prognosticator of fair Weather; for when it sings, fair and good Weather always follows, as the Natives commonly  
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## 72 A DESCRIPTION of the

observe: the Piper of *St. Kilda* plays the Notes which it sings, and hath compos'd a Tune of 'em, which the Natives judg to be very fine Musick.

THE Rain-Goose, bigger than a Duck, makes a doleful Noise before a great Rain; it builds its Nest always upon the brink of fresh-water Lakes, so as it may reach the water.

THE *Bonnivochil*, so call'd by the Natives, and by the Seamen *Bishop* and *Carrara*, as big as a Goose, having a white Spot on the Breast, and the rest party-colour'd; it seldom flies, but is exceeding quick in diving. The Minister of *North-Vist* told me, that he kill'd one of them which weigh'd sixteen Pound and an Ounce: there is about an Inch-deep of Fat upon the Skin of it, which the Natives apply to the Hip-Bone, and by experience find it a successful Remedy for removing the *Sciatica*.

THE Bird *Goylir*, about the bigness of a Swallow, is observ'd never to land but in the Month of *January*, at which time it is suppos'd to hatch; it dives with a violent swiftness. When any number of these Fowls are seen together, it's concluded to be an undoubted sign of an approaching Storm; and when the Storm ceases, they disappear under the water. The Seamen call them *Malifigies*, from *Mali-effigies*, which they often find to be true.

THE

## Western Islands of Scotland. 73

THE Bird *Sereachan-aittin* is about the bigness of a large *Mall*, but having a longer Body, and a bluish Colour; the Bill is of a Carnation Colour. This Bird shrieks most hideously, and is observ'd to have a greater Affection for its Mate, than any Fowl whatsoever; for when the Cock or Hen is kill'd, the surviving one doth for eight or ten days afterward make a lamentable noise about the place.

THE Bird *Faskidar*, about the bigness of a *Sea-Maw* of the middle size, is observ'd to fly with greater swiftness than any other Fowl in those parts, and pursues lesser Fowls, and forces them in their flight to let fall the Food which they have got, and by its Nimbleness catches it, before it touch the Ground.

THE Natives observe that an extraordinary Heat without Rain, at the usual time the Sea-Fowls lay their Eggs, hinders them from laying any Eggs for about eight or ten days; whereas warm Weather accompany'd with Rain disposes them to lay much sooner.

THE Wild-Geese are plentiful here, and very destructive to the Barley, notwithstanding the many methods used for driving them away both by Traps and Gun-shot. There are some Flocks of barren Fowls of all kinds, which are distinguish'd by their not joining with the

74 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

the rest of their kind, and they are seen commonly upon the bare Rocks, without any Nests.

THE Air is here moist and moderately cold, the Natives qualify it sometimes by drinking a Glass of *Usquebaugh*. The Moisture of this Place is such, that a Loaf of Sugar is in danger to be dissolv'd, if it be not preserv'd by being near the Fire, or laying it among Oatmeal, in some close place. Iron here becomes quickly rusty, and Iron which is on the Sea-side of a House grows sooner rusty than that which is on the Land-side.

THE greatest Snow falls here with the South-west Winds, and seldom continues above three or four Days. The ordinary Snow falls with the North and North-west Winds, and does not lie so deep on the Ground near the Sea, as on the tops of Mountains.

THE Frost continues till the Spring is pretty far advanc'd, the Severity of which occasions great numbers of Trouts and Eels to die; but the Winter-Frosts have not this effect, for which the Inhabitants give this reason, *viz.* That the Rains being more frequent in *October*, do in their opinion carry the Juice and Quintessence of the Plants into the Lakes, whereby they think the Fish are nourish'd during the Winter; and there being no such Nourishment

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*Western Islands of Scotland.* 75

in the Spring, in regard of the uninterrupted running of the Water, which carries the Juice with it to the Sea, it deprives the Fish of this Nourishment, and consequently of Life. And they add further, that the Fish have no access to the Superficies of the Water, or to the Brink of it, where the Juice might be had. The Natives are the more confirm'd in their Opinion, that the Fishes in Lakes and Marshes are observ'd to out-live both Winter and Spring-Frosts. The East-North-East Winds always procure fair Weather here, as they do in all the North-West Islands; and the Rains are more frequent in this place in *October* and *February*, than at any other time of the Year.

FOUNTAIN-Water drunk in Winter, is reckon'd by the Natives to be much more wholesom than in the Spring; for in the latter it causeth the Diarrhea and Dysenteria.

THE Diseases that prevail here are Fevers, Diarrhea and Dysenteria, Stitch, Cough, Sciatica, Megrin, the Small-Pox, which commonly comes once in 17 Years time. The ordinary Cure for Fevers, is letting blood plentifully: the Diarrhea is cured by drinking *Aquavite*, and the stronger the better. The Flesh and Liver of Seals are used as above-mention'd, both for the Diarrhea and Dysenteria. Milk wherein Hectick-Stone has been quenched, being frequently drunk, is likewise a good Remedy for the two Diseases last mention'd.

THE



## 76 A DESCRIPTION of the

THE Kernel of the black Nut found on the Shore, being beat to powder, and drunk in Milk or *Aquaviva*, is reckon'd a good Remedy for the said two Diseases: Stitches are cured sometimes by letting blood.

THEIR common Cure for Coughs is *Brochan*, formerly mention'd. The Case of the *Carrara-Fowl*, with the Fat, being powder'd a little, and apply'd to the Hip-bone, is an approved Remedy for the Sciatica. Since the great Change of the Seasons, which of late Years is become more piercing and cold, by which the Growth of the Corn, both in the Spring and Summer Seasons are retarded; there are some Diseases discover'd, which were not known here before, *viz.* a spotted Fever, which is commonly cured by drinking a Glas of Brandy or *Aquaviva* liberally when the Disease seizes them, and using it till the Spots appear outwardly. This Fever was brought hither by a Stranger from the Island of *Mull*, who infected these other Islands. When the Fever is violent, the Spots appear the second Day, but commonly on the fourth Day, and then the Disease comes to a Crisis the seventh Day: but if the Spots don't appear the fourth Day, the Disease is reckon'd mortal; yet it has not prov'd so here, tho it has carry'd off several in the other adjacent Southern Islands. The Vulgar are accusom'd to apply *Flamula Jovis* for

## Western Islands of Scotland. 77

for evacuating noxious Humours, such as cause the Heach-ach, and Pains in the Arms or Legs; and they find great advantage by it. The way of using it is thus: They take a quantity of it, bruised small and put into a *Patella*, and apply it so to the Skin a little below the place affected: in a small time it raises a Blister about the bigness of an Egg, which, when broke, voids all the Matter that is in it; then the Skin fills, and swells twice again, and as often voids this Matter. They use the Sea-plant *Linarich* to cure the Wound, and it proves effectual for this purpose, and also for the Megrim and Burning.

THE Broth of a Lamb, in which the Plants *Shunnish* and *Alexander* have been boil'd, is found by Experience to be good against *Consumptions*. The green Sea-plant *Linarich* is by them apply'd to the Temples and Forehead to dry up Defluxions, and also for drawing up the Tonsels. *Neil Mackdonald* in the Island *Heiskir* is subject to the falling of the Tonsels at every Change of the Moon, and they continue only for the first Quarter. This Infirmity hath continu'd with him all his days, yet he is now 72 Years of Age.

JOHN FAKE who lives in *Pabble* in the Parish of *Kilmoor*, alias *St. Mary's*, is constantly troubled with a great Sneezing a day or two before Rain; and if the Sneezing be more than usual,

## 78 A DESCRIPTION of the

usual, the Rain is said to be the greater: therefore he is call'd the Rain-Almanack. He has had this Faculty these nine Years past.

THERE is a House in the Village call'd *Ard-Nim-boothin* in the Parish of *St. Mary's*; and the House-Cock there never crows from the tenth of *September* till the middle of *March*. This was told me two Years ago, and since confirm'd to me by the Natives, and the present Minister of the Parish.

THE Inhabitants of this Island are generally well-proportion'd, of an ordinary Stature and a good Complexion; healthful, and some of 'em come to a great Age: several of my Acquaintance arriv'd at the Age of 90, and upwards; *John Mackdonald* of *Griminis* was of this number, and died lately in the 93d Year of his Age. *Donald Roy*, who liv'd in the Isle of *Sand*, and died lately in the hundredth Year of his Age, was able to travel and manage his Affairs till about two Years before his Death. They are a very charitable and hospitable People, as is any where to be found. There was never an Inn here till of late, and now there is but one, which is not at all frequented for eating, but only for drinking; for the Natives by their Hospitality render this new-invented House in a manner useless. The great Produce of Barley draws many Strangers to this Island, with a design to procure as much of

## Western Islands of Scotland. 79

of this Grain as they can; which they get of the Inhabitants *gratis*, only for asking, as they do Horses, Cows, Sheep, Wool, &c. I was told some months before my last Arrival there, that there had been ten Men in that place at one time to ask Corn *gratis*, and every one of these had some one, some two, and others three Attendants; and during their abode there, were all entertain'd *gratis*, no one returning empty.

THIS is a great, yet voluntary Tax, which has continu'd for many Ages; but the late general Scarcity has given them an occasion to alter this Custom, by making Acts against Liberality, except to poor Natives and Objects of Charity.

THE Natives are much addicted to riding, the Plainness of the Country disposing both Men and Horses to it. They observe an anniversary Cavalcade on *Michaelmas-Day*, and then all Ranks of both Sexes appear on horseback. The place for this Rendezvous is a large piece of firm sandy Ground on the Sea-shore, and there they have Horse-racing for small Prizes, for which they contend eagerly. There is an antient Custom, by which it is lawful for any of the Inhabitants to steal his Neighbour's Horse the night before the Race, and ride him all next day, provided he deliver him safe and sound to the Owner after the Race. The manner

80 A DESCRIPTION of the

manner of running is by a few young Men, who use neither Saddles nor Bridles, except two small Ropes made of Bent instead of a Bridle, nor any sort of Spurs, but their bare Heels: and when they begin the Race, they throw these Ropes on their Horses necks, and drive'em on vigorously with a piece of long Sea-ware in each hand, instead of a Whip; and this is dry'd in the Sun several Months before for that purpose. This is a happy opportunity for the Vulgar, who have few occasions for meeting, except on Sundays: the Men have their Sweet-hearts behind them on horse-back, and give and receive mutual Presents; the Men present the Women with Knives and Purfes, the Women present the Men with a pair of fine Garters of divers Colours, they give them likewise a quantity of wild Carrots. This Isle belongs in Property to Sir Donald Mackdonald of Sleat: he and all the Inhabitants are Protestants, one only excepted; they observe Christmas, Good-Friday, and St. Michael's Day.

The

Western Islands of Scotland. 81

The Isle Benbecula, its Distance, Length, Bay, Mold, Grain, Fish, Cattle, Fresh Lakes, Forts, a Stone Vault, Nunnery, Proprietor.

THE Island of Benbecula lies directly to the South of North-Vist, from which it is two miles distant; the Ground being all plain and sandy between them, having two little Rivers or Channels no higher than one's knee at a Tide of Ebb: this Passage is overflow'd by the Sea every Tide of Flood, nor is it navigable except by Boats. There are several small Islands on the East-side of this Channel. This Island is three Miles in length from South to North, and three from East to West, and ten Miles in compass. The East-side is cover'd with Heath; it hath a Bay call'd Viskway, in which small Vessels do sometimes harbour, and now and then Herrings are taken in it.

THE Mountain Benbecula, from which the Isle hath its Name, lies in the middle of it: the Eastern part of this Island is all arable, but the Soil sandy, the Mould is the same with that of North-Vist, and affords the same Corn, Fish, Cattle, Amphibia, &c. There is no venomous Creature here. It hath several fresh-

## 82 A DESCRIPTION of the

fresh-water Lakes well stock'd with Fish and Fowl. There are some Ruins of old Forts to be seen in the small Islands, in the Lakes, and on the Plain.

THERE are also some small Chappels here, one of them at *Bael-nin-Killach, id est, Nuns-Town*, for there were Nunneries here in time of Popery. The Natives have lately discover'd a Stone Vault on the East-side the Town, in which there are abundance of small Bones, which have occasion'd many uncertain Conjectures; some said they were the Bones of Birds, others judg'd them rather to be the Bones of Pigmies. The Proprietor of the Town enquiring Sir *Normand Macklead's* Opinion concerning them, he told him that the matter was plain as he suppos'd, and that they must be the Bones of Infants born by the Nuns there. This was very disagreeable to the Roman Catholick Inhabitants, who laugh'd it over. But in the mean time the Natives out of Zeal took care to shut up the Vault, that no access can be had to it since; so that it would seem they believe what Sir *Normand* said, or else fear'd that it might gain credit by such as afterward had occasion to see them. This Island belongs properly to *Ranal Mackdonald of Berbecula*, who, with all the Inhabitants, are Roman Catholicks; and I remember I have seen an old Lay Capuchin here, call'd in the Language *Brahir-bocht*, that is,

## Western Islands of Scotland. 83

is, *Poor Brother*; which is literally true, for he answers this Character, having nothing but what is given him: He holds himself fully satisfy'd with Food and Rayment, and lives in as great Simplicity as any of his Order; his Diet is very mean, and he drinks only fair Water: his Habit is no less mortifying than that of his Brethren elsewhere; he wears a short Coat, which comes no further than his Middle, with narrow Sleeves like a Waistcoat; he wears a Plad above it girt about the Middle, which reaches to his Knee: the Plad is fasten'd on his Breast with a wooden Pin, his Neck bare, and his Feet often so too: he wears a Hat for Ornament, and the String about it is a Bit of Fisher's Line made of Horse-hair. This Plad he wears instead of a Gown worn by those of his Order in other Countries. I told him he wanted the flaxen Girdle that Men of his Order usually wear: he answer'd me, that he wore a Leather one, which was the same thing. Upon the matter, if he is spoke to when at Meat, he answers again; which is contrary to the Custom of his Order. This poor Man frequently diverts himself with Angling of Trouts; he lies upon Straw, and had no Bell (as others have) to call him to his Devotion, but only his Conscience, as he told me.

THE speckled Salmon, describ'd in *North-Vist*, are very plentiful on the West side of this Island.



THE Island of *South-Vist* lies directly two Miles to the South of *Benbecula*, being in length one and twenty Miles, and three in breadth, and in some places four. The East-side is mountainous on the Coast, and heathy for the most part: the West side is plain arable Ground, the Soil is generally sandy, yielding a good Produce of Barley, Oats, and Rye, in proportion to that of *North-Vist*, and has the same sort of Cattle. Both East and West sides of this Island abound in fresh-water Lakes, which afford Trouts and Eels, besides variety of Land and Sea-Fowls. The arable Land is much damnify'd by the overflowing of these Lakes in divers places, which they have not hitherto been able to drain, tho' the thing be practicable. Several Lakes have old Forts built upon the small Islands in the middle of them. About four Miles on the South-East end of this Island, is *Loch-Eynord*; it reaches several Miles Westward, having a narrow Entry, which makes a violent Current, and within this Entry there's a Rock, upon which there was staved to pieces a Frigate of *Cromwell's*, which he sent there to subdue the Natives. Ambergrease hath been found by several of the Inhabitants on the West Coast of this Island, and they sold it at *Glasgow* at a very low rate, not knowing the value of it at first; but when they knew it, they rais'd the Price to the other Extreme. Upon a Thaw after a long Frost, the

the South-East Winds cast many dead Fishes on the shore. The Inhabitants are generally of the same Nature and Complexion with those of the next adjacent Northern Islands; they wear the same Habit, and use the same Diet. One of the Natives is very famous for his great Age, being, as it's said, a hundred and thirty Years old, and retains his Appetite and Understanding; he can walk abroad, and did labour with his hands as usually, till within these three Years, and for any thing I know is yet living.

THERE are several big Kairnes of Stone on the East-side this Island, and the Vulgar retain the ancient Custom of making a Religious Tour round them on Sundays and Holidays.

THERE is a Valley between two Mountains on the East-side, call'd *Glenlyte*, which affords good Pasturage. The Natives who farm it, come thither with their Cattle in the Summer-time, and are possessed with a firm Belief that this Valley is haunted by Spirits, who by the Inhabitants are call'd the great Men; and that whatsoever Man or Woman enters the Valley, without making first an entire Resignation of themselves to the Conduct of the great Men, will infallibly grow mad. The words by which he or she gives up himself to these Mens Conduct, are comprehended



## 86 A DESCRIPTION of the

ded in three Sentences, wherein the *Glen* is twice named; to which they add, that it is inhabited by these great Men, and that such as enter depend on their Protection. I told the Natives, that this was a piece of silly Credulity as ever was impos'd upon the most ignorant Ages, and that their imaginary Protectors deserv'd no such Invocation. They answer'd, That there had happen'd a late Instance of a Woman who went into that *Glen* without resigning her self to the Conduct of these Men, and immediately after she became mad; which confirm'd them in their unreasonable Fancy.

THE People residing here in Summer, say they sometimes hear a loud noise in the Air, like Men speaking. I enquir'd if their Priest had preach'd or argu'd against this superstitious Custom? They told me, he knew better things, and would not be guilty of dissuading Men from doing their Duty, which they doubted not he judg'd this to be; and that they resolv'd to persist in the Belief of it, until they found better Motives to the contrary, than have been shew'd them hitherto. The Protestant Minister hath often endeavour'd to undeceive them, but in vain, because of an Implicit Faith they have in their Priest: and when the Topicks of Persuasion, tho never so urgent, come from one they believe to be a Heretick, there is little hope of success.

THE

## Western Islands of Scotland. 87

THE Island *Erista*, about a Mile in length, and three in circumference, is partly heathy, and partly arable, and yields a good Produce. The inner-side hath a wide Anchorage, there is excellent Cod and Ling in it; the Natives begin to manage it better, but not to that advantage it is capable of. The small Island near it was overgrown with Heath, and about three Years ago the Ground threw up all that Heath from the very root, so that there is not now one Shrub of it in all this Island. Such as have occasion to travel by Land between *South-Vist* and *Benbecula*, or *Benbecula* and *North-Vist*, had need of a Guide to direct them, and to observe the Tide when low, and also for crossing the Channel at the right Fords, else they cannot pass without danger.

THERE are some Houses under-ground in this Island, and they are in all points like those describ'd in *North-Vist*; one of them is in the South Ferry-Town, opposite to *Barray*. The Cattle produc'd here, are like those of *North-Vist*, and there are above three hundred Deer in this Island: it was believ'd generally, that no venomous Creature was here, yet of late some little Vipers have been seen in the South end of the Island.

THE Natives speak the *Irish* Tongue more perfectly here, than in most of the other Islands;

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Islands; partly because of the Remoteness, and the small number of those that speak *English*, and partly because some of 'em are Scholars, and vers'd in the *Irish* Language. They wear the same Habit with the neighbouring Islanders.

THE more antient People continue to wear the old Dress, especially Women: they are a hospitable well-meaning People, but the Misfortune of their Education disposes them to Uncharitableness, and rigid Thoughts of their Protestant Neighbours; tho at the same time they find it convenient to make Alliances with them. The Churches here are *St. Columba* and *St. Mary's* in *Hogh-more*, the most central place in the Island; *St. Jeremy's* Chapels, *St. Peter's*, *St. Bannan*, *St. Michael*, *St. Donnan*.

THERE is a Stone set up near a Mile to the South of *Columbus's* Church, about 8 foot high, and 2 foot broad: it is call'd by the Natives the *Bowing-Stone*; for when the Inhabitants had the first sight of the Church, they set up this Stone, and there bow'd and said the Lord's Prayer. There was a Buckle of Gold found in *Einort* Ground some twenty years ago, which was about the value of seven Guineas.

AS I came from *South-Vist*, I perceiv'd about sixty Horsemen riding along the Sands, directing

ing their Course for the East-Sea; and being between me and the Sun, they made a great figure on the plain Sands: We discover'd them to be Natives of *South-Vist*, for they alighted from their Horses, and went to gather Cockles in the Sands, which are exceeding plentiful there. This Island is the Property of *Allan Mackdonald* of *Moydart*, Head of the Tribe of *Mackdonald*, call'd *Glanronalds*; one of the chief Families descended of *Mackdonald*, who was Lord and King of the Islands. He and all the Inhabitants are Papists, except sixty, who are Protestants: the Papists observe all the Festivals of their Church, they have a general Cavalcade on *All-Saints Day*, and then they bake *St. Michael's* Cake at night, and the Family and Strangers eat it at Supper.

FERGUS BEATON hath the following antient *Irish* Manuscripts in the *Irish* Character; to wit, *Avicenna*, *Averroes*, *Joannes de Vigo*, *Bernardus Gordonus*, and several Volumes of *Hypocrates*.

THE Island of *Barray* lies about two Leagues and a half to the South-West of the Island *South-Vist*; it is five Miles in length, and three in breadth, being in all respects like the Islands lying directly North from it. The East side is rocky, and the West arable Ground, and yields a good Produce of the same Grain that both *Vists* do: they use likewise the same way

90 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

way for enriching their Land with Sea-ware. There is plenty of Cod and Ling got on the East and South-sides of this Island: several small Ships from *Orkney* come hither in Summer, and afterward return loaden with Cod and Ling.

THERE is a safe Harbour on the North-East side of *Burray*, where there is great plenty of Fish.

THE Rivers on the East side afford Salmon, some of which are speckled like these mention'd in *North-Vist*, but they are more successful here in catching them. The Natives go with three several Herring-Nets, and lay them cross-ways in the River where the Salmon are most numerous, and betwixt them and the Sea. These Salmon at the sight or shadow of the People make towards the Sea, and feeling the Net from the Surface to the Ground, jump over the first, then the second, but being weakned, cannot get over the third Net, and so are catch'd. They delight to leap above water, and swim on the Surface: one of the Natives told me, that he kill'd a Salmon with a Gun, as jumping above water.

THEY inform'd me also, that many Barrels of them might be taken in the River above-mention'd, if there was any encouragement for

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 91

for curing and transporting them. There are several old Forts to be seen here, in form like those in the other Islands. In the South end of this Island there is an Orchard, which produces Trees, but few of them bear Fruit, in regard of their Nearness to the Sea. All sorts of Roots and Plants grow plentifully in it: some years ago Tobacco did grow here, being of all Plants the most grateful to the Natives, for the Islanders love it mightily.

THE little Island *Kismul* lies about a quarter of a mile from the South of this Isle; it is the Seat of *Mackneil* of *Burray*, there is a stone Wall round it two stories high, reaching the Sea, and within the Wall there is an old Tower and an Hall, with other Houses about it. There is a little Magazine in the Tower, to which no Stranger has access. I saw the Officer call'd the *Cockman*, and an old Cock he is: when I bid him ferry me over the Water to the Island, he told me that he was but an inferior Officer, his business being to attend in the Tower; but if (says he) the Constable, who then stood on the Wall, will give you access, I'll ferry you over. I desir'd him to procure me the Constable's Permission, and I would reward him; but having waited some hours for the Constable's Answer, and not receiving any, I was oblig'd to return without seeing this famous Fort. *Mackneil* and his Lady being absent, was the cause of this difficulty, and of my

## 92 A DESCRIPTION of the

my not seeing the Place. I was told some weeks after, that the Constable was very apprehensive of some Design I might have in viewing the Fort, and thereby to expose it to the Conquest of a foreign Power; of which I suppos'd there was no great cause of fear. The Natives told me there is a Well in the Village *Tangstill*, the Water of which being boil'd, grows thick like Puddle. There is another Well not far from *Tangstill*, which the Inhabitants say in a fertile Year throws up many Grains of Barley in *July* and *August*. And they say that the Well of *Kilbar* throws up Embrios of Cockles, but I could not discern any in the Rivulet, the Air being at that time foggy. The Church in this Island is call'd *Kilbarr*, i. e. *St. Barr's Church*. There is a little Chappel by it, in which *Mackneil*, and those descended of his Family, are usually interred. The Natives have *St. Barr's* wooden Image standing on the Altar, cover'd with Linen in form of a Shirt: all their greatest Affe-  
 verations are by this Saint. I came very early in the Morning with an intention to see this Image, but was disappointed; for the Natives prevented me, by carrying it away, lest I might take occasion to ridicule their Superstition, as some Protestants have done formerly: and when I was gone, it was again expos'd on the Altar. They have several Traditions concerning this great Saint. There is a Chappel (about half a mile on the South side of the Hill

## Western Islands of Scotland. 93

Hill near *St. Barr's Church*) where I had occasion to get an account of a Tradition concerning this Saint, which was thus: *The Inhabitants having begun to build the Church, which they dedicated to him, they laid this Wooden Image within it, but it was invisibly transported (as they say) to the Place where the Church now stands, and found there every morning.* This miraculous Conveyance is the Reason they give for desisting to work where they first began. I told my Informer that this extraordinary Motive was sufficient to determine the Case, if true, but ask'd his Pardon to dissent from him, for I had not Faith enough to believe this Miracle; at which he was surpriz'd, telling me in the mean time, that this Tradition hath been faithfully convey'd by the Priests and Natives successively to this day. The *Southern Islands* are, (1.) *Muldonsib*, about a Mile in Circumference; it is high in the middle, cover'd over with Heath and Grass, and is the only Forest here for maintaining the Deer, being commonly about seventy or eighty in number. (2.) The Island *Sandrera* lies Southerly of *Barray*, from which it is separated by a narrow Channel, and is three Miles in Circumference, having a Mountain in the middle; it is design'd for Pasturage and Cultivation. On the South side there is an Harbour convenient for small Vessels, that come yearly here to fish for Cod and Ling, which abound  
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94 A DESCRIPTION of the

on the Coast of this Island. (3.) The Island *Sandreray*, two Miles in Circumference, is fruitful in Corn and Grass, and separated by a narrow Channel from *Vatterfay*. (4.) To the South of these lies the Island *Berneray*, about two Miles in Circumference; it excels other Islands of the same Extent for Cultivation and Fishing. The Natives never go a fishing while *Mackneil* or his Steward is in the Island, lest seeing their plenty of Fish, perhaps they might take occasion to raise their Rents. There is an old Fort in this Island, having a Vacuity round the Walls, divided in little Apartments. The Natives endure a great Fatigue in manuring their Ground with Sea-ware, which they carry in Ropes upon their Backs over high Rocks. They likewise fasten a Cow to a Stake, and spread a quantity of Sand on the Ground, upon which the Cow's Dung falls, and this they mingle together, and lay it on the arable Land. They take great Numbers of Sea-Fowls from the adjacent Rocks, and salt them with the Ashes of burnt Sea-ware in Cows Hides, which preserves them from Putrefaction.

THERE is a sort of Stone in this Island, with which the Natives frequently rub their Breasts by way of prevention, and say it is a good Preservative for Health. This is all the Medicine they use; Providence is very favourable

Western Islands of Scotland. 95

vourable to them, in granting them a good State of Health, since they have no Physician among them.

THE Inhabitants are very hospitable, and have a Custom, that when any Strangers from the *Northern* Islands resort thither, the Natives, immediately after their Landing, oblige them to eat, even tho they should have liberally eat and drunk but an Hour before their Landing there. And this Meal they call *Bieyta'v*; i. e. Ocean Meat; for they presume that the sharp Air of the Ocean, which indeed surrounds them, must needs give them a good Appetite. And whatever Number of Strangers come there, or of whatsoever Quality or Sex, they are regularly lodg'd according to antient Custom, that is, one only in a Family; by which Custom a Man cannot lodg with his own Wife, while in this Island. Mr. *John Campbell*, the present Minister of *Harries*, told me, that his Father being then Parson of *Harries*, and Minister of *Burray* (for the Natives at that time were Protestants) carry'd his Wife along with him, and resided in this Island for some time, and they dispos'd of him, his Wife and Servants in manner above-mention'd: and suppose *Mackneil* of *Burray* and his Lady should go thither, he would be oblig'd to comply with this antient Custom.

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THERE is a large Root grows among the Rocks of this Island lately discover'd, the Natives call it *Curran-Petris*, of a whitish Colour, and upwards of two foot in length, where the Ground is deep, and in Shape and Size like a large Carrot; where the Ground is not so deep, it grows much thicker, but shorter: the top of it is like that of a Carrot.

THE Rock *Linmull*, about half a Mile in Circumference, is indifferently high, and almost inaccessible, except in one Place, and that is by climbing, which is very difficult. This Rock abounds with Sea-Fowls that build and hatch here in Summer; such as the *Guillemot*, *Coulter-neb*, *Puffin*, &c. The chief Climber is commonly call'd *Gingich*, and this Name imports a big Man having Strength and Courage proportionable. When they approach the Rock with the Boat, Mr. *Gingich* jumps out first upon a Stone on the Rock-side, and then, by the assistance of a Rope of Horse-hair, he draws his Fellows out of the Boat upon this high Rock, and draws the rest up after him with the Rope, till they all arrive at the Top, where they purchase a considerable Quantity of Fowls and Eggs. Upon their return to the Boat, this *Gingich* runs a great hazard, by jumping first into the Boat again, where the violent Sea continually rages; having but a few Fowls more than his Fellows, besides

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a greater Esteem to compensate his Courage. When a Tenant's Wife in this or the adjacent Islands dies, he then addresseth himself to *Mackneil* of *Barray*, representing his Loss, and at the same time desires that he would be pleas'd to recommend a Wife to him, without which he cannot manage his Affairs, nor beget Followers to *Mackneil*, which would prove a publick Loss to him. Upon this Representation, *Mackneil* finds out a suitable Match for him; and the Woman's Name being told him, immediately he goes to her, carrying with him a Bottle of strong Waters for their Entertainment at Marriage, which is then consummated.

WHEN a Tenant dies, the Widow addresseth her self to *Mackneil* in the same manner, who likewise provides her with a Husband, and they are marry'd without any further Courtship. There is in this Island an Altar dedicated to *St. Christopher*, at which the Natives perform their Devotion. There is a Stone set up here, about seven foot high; and when the Inhabitants come near it, they take a religious Turn round it.

IF a Tenant chance to lose his Milk-Cows by the Severity of the Season, or any other Misfortune; in this Case *Mackneil* of *Barray* supplies him with the like Number that he lost.

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WHEN any of these Tenants are so far advanc'd in Years that they are incapable to till the Ground, *Mackneil* takes such old Men into his own Family, and maintains them all their Life after. The Natives observe, that if six Sheep are put a grazing in the little Island *Pabbay*, five of them still appear fat, but the sixth a poor Skeleton; but any Number in this Island not exceeding five are always very fat. There is a little Island not far from this, call'd *Micklay*, of the same Extent as *Pabbay*, and hath the same way of feeding of Sheep. These little Islands afford excellent Hawks.

THE Isles above-mention'd, lying near to the South of *Burray*, are commonly call'd the *Bishop's Isles*, because they are held of the Bishop. Some Isles lie on the East and North of *Burray*, as *Fiaray*, *Mellisay*, *Buya Major* and *Minor*, *Lingay*, *Fuda*: they afford Pasturage, and are commodious for Fishing; and the latter being about two Miles in Circumference, is fertile in Corn and Grass. There is a good anchoring Place next to the Isle on the North-East Side.

THE Steward of the Lesser and Southern Islands is reckon'd a Great Man here, in regard of the Perquisites due to him; such as a particular share of all the Lands, Corn, Butter, Cheese, Fish, &c. which these Islands produce:

duce: the Measure of Barley paid him by each Family yearly, is an Omer, as they call it, containing about two Pecks.

THERE is an inferior Officer, who also hath a right to a share of all the same Products. Next to these come in course those of the lowest Posts, such as the Cockman and Porter, each of whom hath his respective Due, which is punctually paid.

*MACKNEIL* of *Burray* and all his Followers are Roman Catholicks, one only excepted, viz. *Murdock Mackneil*; and it may perhaps be thought no small Virtue in him to adhere to the Protestant Communion, considering the Disadvantages he labours under by the want of his Chief's Favour, which is much lessen'd, for being a Heretick, as they call him. All the Inhabitants observe the Anniversary of *St. Barr*, being the 27th of September; it is perform'd riding on Horseback, and the Solemnity is concluded by three Turns round *St. Barr's Church*. This brings into my Mind a Story which was told me concerning a foreign Priest, and the Entertainment he met with after his Arrival there some Years ago, as follows: This Priest happen'd to land here upon the very Day, and at the particular Hour of this Solemnity, which was the more acceptable to the Inhabitants, who then desir'd him to preach a Commemoration Sermon to the Honour of  
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## 100 A DESCRIPTION of the

their Patron St. *Barr*, according to the antient Custom of the Place. At this the Priest was surpriz'd, he never having heard of St. *Barr* before that Day; and therefore knowing nothing of his Virtues, could say nothing concerning him: but told them, that if a Sermon to the Honour of St. *Paul* or St. *Peter* could please them, they might have it instantly. This Answer of his was so disagreeable to them, that they plainly told him he could be no true Priest, if he had not heard of St. *Barr*, for the Pope himself had heard of him; but this would not persuade the Priest, so that they parted much dissatisfy'd with one another. They have likewise a general Cavalcade on St. *Michael's* Day in *Kilbar* Village, and do then also take a Turn round their Church. Every Family, as soon as the Solemnity is ended, is accustom'd to bake St. *Michael's* Cake, as above describ'd; and all Strangers, together with those of the Family, must eat the Bread that Night.

THIS Island, and the adjacent lesser Islands, belong in property to *Mackneil*, being the thirty fourth of that Name by Lineal Descent that has possess'd this Island, if the present *Genealogers* may be credited. He holds his Lands in Vassalage of Sir *Donald Macdonald* of *Slate*, to whom he pays 40*l.* per ann. and a Hawk, if requir'd, and is oblig'd to furnish him a certain Number of Men upon extraordinary Occasions.

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## Western Islands of Scotland. 101

## The Antient and Modern Customs of the Inhabitants of the Western Islands of Scotland.

EVERY Heir, or young Chieftain of a Tribe, was oblig'd in Honour to give a publick Specimen of his Valour, before he was own'd and declar'd Governor or Leader of his People, who obey'd and follow'd him upon all Occasions.

THIS Chieftain was usually attended with a Retinue of young Men of Quality, who had not beforehand given any Proof of their Valour, and were ambitious of such an Opportunity to signalize themselves.

IT was usual for the Captain to lead them, to make a desperate Incurfion upon some Neighbour or other that they were in Feud with; and they were oblig'd to bring by open force the Cattel they found in the Lands they attack'd, or to die in the Attempt.

AFTER the Performance of this Atchievement, the young Chieftain was ever after reputed valiant and worthy of Government, and such as were of his Retinue acquir'd the like Reputation. This Custom being reciprocally us'd among them, was not reputed Robbe-

102 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

ry, for the Damage which one Tribe sustain'd by this Essay of the Chieftain of another, was repair'd when their Chieftain came in his turn to make his Specimen: but I have not heard an Instance of this Practice for these sixty Years past.

THE Formalities observ'd at the Entrance of these Chieftains upon the Government of their Clans, were as follow:

A HEAP of Stones was erected in form of a Pyramid, on the top of which the young Chieftain was plac'd, his Friends and Followers standing in a Circle round about him, his Elevation signifying his Authority over them, and their standing below their Subjection to him. One of his principal Friends deliver'd into his Hands the Sword wore by his Father, and there was a white Rod deliver'd to him likewise at the same time.

IMMEDIATELY after the Chief Druid (or Orator) stood close to the Pyramid, and pronounc'd a Rhetorical Panegyrick, setting forth the antient Pedegree, Valour, and Liberality of the Family, as Incentives to the young Chieftain, and fit for his imitation.

IT was their Custom, when any Chieftain march'd upon a military Expedition, to draw some

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 103

some Blood from the first Animal that chanc'd to meet them upon the Enemy's Ground, and thereafter to sprinkle some of it upon their Colours. This they reckon'd as a good Omen of future Success.

THEY had their fix'd Officers, who were ready to attend them upon all Occasions, whether Military or Civil. Some Families continue them from Father to Son, particularly Sir *Donald Macdonald* has his principal Standard-Bearer and Quarter-master. The latter has a right to all the Hides of Cows kill'd upon any of the Occasions mention'd above; and this I have seen exacted punctually, tho the Officer had no Charter for the same, but only Custom.

THEY had a constant Centinel on the top of their Houses call'd *Gockmin*, or, in the *English* Tongue, *Cockman*; who was oblig'd to watch Day and Night, and at the approach of any body, to ask, *Who comes there?* This Officer is continu'd in *Barray* still, and has the Perquisites due to his Place paid him duly at two Terms in the Year.

THERE was a competent number of young Gentlemen call'd *Luchktaeh*, or *Guard de Corps*, who always attended the Chieftain at Home and Abroad. They were well train'd in managing the Sword and Target, in Wrestling,



ling, Swimming, Jumping, Dancing, Shooting with Bows and Arrows, and were stout Seamen.

EVERY Chieftain had a bold Armour-Bearer, whose Business was always to attend the Person of his Master night and day to prevent any Surprize, and this Man was call'd *Galloglach*; he had likewise a double Portion of Meat assign'd him at every Meal. The Measure of Meat usually given him, is call'd to this day *Bieysir*, that is, a Man's Portion; meaning thereby an extraordinary Man, whose Strength and Courage distinguish'd him from the common sort.

BEFORE they engag'd the Enemy in Battle, the Chief Druid harangu'd the Army to excite their Courage. He was plac'd on an Eminence, from whence he address'd himself to all of them standing about him, putting them in mind of what great things were perform'd by the Valour of their Ancestors, rais'd their Hopes with the noble Rewards of Honour and Victory, and dispell'd their Fears by all the Topicks that natural Courage could suggest. After this Harangue, the Army gave a general Shout, and then charg'd the Enemy stoutly. This in the antient Language was call'd *Brosnichy Kab*, i. e. an Incentive to War. This Custom of shouting aloud is believ'd to have taken its Rise from an

an Instinct of Nature, it being attributed to most Nations that have been of a martial Genius: As by *Homer* to the *Trojans*, by *Tacitus* to the *Germans*, by *Livy* to the *Gauls*. Every great Family in the Isles had a Chief Druid, who foretold future Events, and decided all Causes Civil and Ecclesiastical. It is reported of them that they wrought in the Night-time, and rested all Day. *Cesar* says they worshipp'd a Deity under the name of *Taramis*, or *Taran*, which in *Welsh* signifies *Thunder*; and in the antient Language of the *Highlanders*, *Torin* signifies *Thunder* also.

ANOTHER God of the *Britons* was *Belus*, or *Belinus*, which seems to have been the *Assyrian* God *Bel*, or *Belus*; and probably from this Pagan Deity comes the *Scots* Term of *Beltin*, the Day of *May*, having its first Rise from the Custom practis'd by the Druids in the Isles, of extinguishing all the Fires in the Parish until the Tythes were paid; and upon payment of them, the Fires were kindled in each Family, and never till then. In those days Malefactors were burnt between two Fires; hence when they would express a Man to be in a great strait, they say, *he is between two Fires of Bel*, which in their Language they express thus, *Edir da hin Veaul or Bel*. Some object that the Druids could not be in the Isles, because no Oaks grow there. To which I answer, That in those days



106 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

days Oaks did grow there, and to this day there be Oaks growing in some of them, particularly in *Sleat*, the most *Southern* part of the *Isle of Skie*. The Houses named after those Druids shall be describ'd elsewhere.

THE manner of Drinking us'd by the chief Men of the Isles, is call'd in their Language *Streak*, i. e. a *Round*; for the Company sit in a Circle, the Cup-Bearer fill'd the Drink round to them, and all was drank out, whatever the Liquor was, whether strong or weak; they continu'd drinking sometimes twenty four, sometimes forty eight Hours: It was reckon'd a piece of Manhood to drink until they became drunk, and there were two Men with a Barrow attending punctually on such Occasions. They stood at the Door until some became drunk, and they carry'd them upon the Barrow to Bed, and return'd again to their Post as long as any continu'd fresh, and so carry'd off the whole Company one by one as they became drunk. Several of my Acquaintance have been Witnesses to this Custom of Drinking, but it is now abolish'd.

AMONG Persons of Distinction it was reckon'd an Affront put upon any Company to broach a Piece of Wine, Ale, or *Aquavita*, and not to see it all drank out at one Meeting. If any Man chance to go out from the Company, tho' but for a few Minutes, he is oblig'd

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 107

lig'd upon his Return, and before he take his Seat, to make an Apology for his Absence in Rhyme; which if he cannot perform, he is liable to such a share of the Reckoning as the Company thinks fit to impose: which Custom obtains in many places still, and is call'd *Beanchiy Bard*; which in their Language signifies the Poet's congratulating the Company.

IT hath been an antient Custom in these Isles, and still continues, when any number of Men retire into a House, either to discourse of serious Business, or to pass some time in drinking; upon these occasions the Door of the House stands open, and a Rod is put cross the same, which is understood to be a sign to all Persons without distinction not to approach: and if any should be so rude as to take up this Rod, and come in uncall'd, he is sure to be no welcome Guest; for this is accounted such an Affront to the Company, that they are bound in honour to resent it; and the Person offending may come to have his Head broken, if he do not meet with a harsher Reception.

THE Chieftain is usually attended with a numerous Retinue when he goes a hunting the Deer, this being his first Specimen of manly Exercise. All his Clothes, Arms, and Hunting-Equipage are, upon his Return from the

108 *A DESCRIPTION of the*  
the Hills, given to the Forester, according to  
Custom.

EVERY Family had commonly two Stewards, which in their Language were call'd *Marischall Taeb*: the first of these serv'd always at home, and was oblig'd to be well vers'd in the Pedegree of all the Tribes in the Isles, and in the Highlands of *Scotland*; for it was his Province to assign every Man at Table his Seat according to his Quality; and this was done without one word speaking, only by drawing a Score with a white Rod which this *Marischall* had in his hand, before the Person who was bid by him to sit down: and this was necessary to prevent Disorder and Contention; and tho the *Marischall* might sometimes be mistaken, the Master of the Family incurr'd no Censure by such an Escape: but this Custom has been laid aside of late. They had also Cup-bearers, who always fill'd and carry'd the Cup round the Company, and he himself drank off the first Draught. They had likewise Purse-masters, who kept their Money. Both these Officers had an hereditary Right to their Office in Writing, and each of them had a Town and Land for his Service: some of those Rights I have seen fairly written on good Parchment.

BESIDES the ordinary Rent paid by the Tenant to his Master, if a Cow brought forth

*Western Islands' of Scotland.* 109

forth two Calves at a time, which indeed is extraordinary, or an Ewe two Lambs, which is frequent, the Tenant paid to the Master one of the Calves or Lambs; and the Master on his part was oblig'd, if any of his Tenants Wives bore Twins, to take one of them, and breed him in his own Family. I have known a Gentleman, who had sixteen of these Twins in his Family at a time.

THEIR antient Leagues of Friendship were ratify'd by drinking a Drop of each other's Blood, which was commonly drawn out of the little Finger. This was religiously observ'd as a sacred Bond; and if any Person after such an Alliance happen'd to violate the same, he was from that time reputed unworthy of all honest Mens Conversation. Before Money became current, the Chieftains in the Isles bestow'd the Cow's Head, Feet, and all the Entrails upon their Dependents; such as the Physician, Orator, Poet, Bard, Musicians, &c. and the same was divided thus: the Smith had the Head, the Piper had the, &c.

IT was an antient Custom among the Islanders, to hang a He-Goat to the Boat's Mast, hoping thereby to procure a favourable Wind: but this is not practis'd at present; tho I am told it hath been done once by some of the Vulgar within these 13 Years last past.

THEY

THEY had an universal Custom, of pouring a Cow's Milk upon a little Hill, or big Stone, where the Spirit call'd *Bronny* was believ'd to lodg: this Spirit always appear'd in the shape of a tall Man, having very long brown Hair. There was scarce any the least Village in which this superstitious Custom did not prevail. I enquir'd the reason of it from several well-meaning Women, who, until of late, had practis'd it; and they told me, that it had been transmitted to them by their Ancestors successfully, who believ'd it was attended with good Fortune, but the most Credulous of the Vulgar had now laid it aside. It was an ordinary thing among the Over-curious to consult an invisible Oracle, concerning the Fate of Families, and Battles, &c. This was perform'd three different ways; the first was by a Company of Men, one of whom being detach'd by Lot, was afterwards carry'd to a River, which was the Boundary between two Villages; four of the Company laid hold on him, and having shut his Eyes, they took him by the Legs and Arms, and then tossing him to and again, struck his Hips with force against the Bank. One of them cry'd out, What is it you have got here? Another answers, A Log of Birch-wood. The other cries again, Let his invisible Friends appear from all quarters, and let them relieve him by giving an Answer to our present Demands: and in a few

few Minutes after, a number of little Creatures came from the Sea, who answer'd the Question, and disappear'd suddenly. The Man was then set at liberty, and they all return'd home, to take their Measures according to the Prediction of their false Prophets; but the poor deluded Fools were abused, for the Answer was still ambiguous. This was always practis'd in the Night, and may literally be call'd the Works of Darknes.

I HAD an account from the most intelligent and judicious Men in the Isle of *Skie*, that about sixty two Years ago, the Oracle was thus consulted only once, and that was in the Parish of *Kilmartin*, on the East side, by a wicked and mischievous Race of People, who are now extinguish'd, both Root and Branch.

THE second way of consulting the Oracle was by a Party of Men, who first retir'd to solitary Places, remote from any House, and there they singled out one of their number, and wrapt him in a big Cow's Hide, which they folded about him: his whole Body was cover'd with it except his Head, and so left in this posture all night, until his invisible Friends reliev'd him, by giving a proper Answer to the Question in hand; which he receiv'd, as he fancy'd, from several Persons that he found about him all that time. His Consorts return'd  
to

to him at Break of Day, and then he communicated his News to them; which often prov'd fatal to those concern'd in such unwarrantable Enquiries.

THERE was a third way of consulting, which was a Confirmation of the second above-mention'd. The same Company who put the Man into the Hide, took a live Cat and put him on a Spit; one of the number was employ'd to turn the Spit, and one of his Conforts enquir'd of him, What are you doing? He answer'd, I roast this Cat, until his Friends answer the Question; which must be the same that was propos'd by the Man shut up in the Hide. And afterwards a very big Cat comes, attended by a number of lesser Cats, desiring to relieve the Cat turn'd upon the Spit, and then answers the Question. If this Answer prov'd the same that was given to the Man in the Hide, then it was taken as a Confirmation of the other, which in this case was believ'd infallible.

Mr. *Alexander Cooper*, present Minister of *North-Vist*, told me, that one *John Erach* in the Isle of *Lewis* assur'd him, it was his Fate to have been led by his Curiosity with some who consulted this Oracle, and that he was a Night within the Hide, as above mention'd; during which time he felt and heard such terrible things, that he could not express them: the

the Impression it made on him was such as could never go off, and he said that for a thousand Worlds he would never again be concern'd in the like performance, for this had disorder'd him to a high degree. He confess'd it ingenuously, and with an Air of great Remorse, and seem'd to be very penitent under a just Sense of so great a Crime: he declared this about five Years since, and is still living in the *Lewis*, for any thing I know. The Inhabitants here did also make use of a Fire call'd *Tin-Egin*, *i. e.* a forced Fire, or Fire of necessity; which they used as an Antidote against the Plague or Murrain in Cattel; and it was perform'd thus: All the Fires in the Parish were extinguish'd, and then eighty one marry'd Men, being thought the necessary number for effecting this Design, took two great Planks of Wood, and nine of 'em were employ'd by turns, who by their repeated Efforts rubb'd one of the Planks against the other until the Heat thereof produced Fire; and from this forc'd Fire each Family is supply'd with new Fire, which is no sooner kindled, than a Pot full of Water is quickly set on it, and afterwards sprinkled upon the People infected with the Plague, or upon the Cattle that have the Murrain. And this they all say they find successful by Experience: it was practis'd in the main Land, opposite to the South of *Skie*, within these thirty Years.

H

THEY

THEY preserve their Boundaries from being liable to any Debates by their Successors, thus: They lay a quantity of the Ashes of burnt Wood in the Ground, and put big Stones above the same; and for conveying the knowledg of this to Posterity, they carry some Boys from both Villages next the Boundary, and there whip 'em soundly, which they will be sure to remember, and tell it to their Children. A Debate having risen betwixt the Villages of *Ose* and *Groban* in *Skie*, they found Ashes as above mention'd under a Stone, which decided the Controversy. It was an antient Custom in the Islands, that a Man should take a Maid to his Wife, and keep her the space of a Year without marrying her; and if she pleased him all the while, he marry'd her at the end of the Year, and legitimated these Children: but if he did not love her, he return'd her to her Parents, and her Portion also; and if there happen'd to be any Children, they were kept by the Father: but this unreasonable Custom was long ago brought in disuse.

IT is common in these Islands, when a Tenant dies, for the Master to have his choice of all the Horses which belong'd to the Deceas'd; and this was call'd the *Eachfuin Horizeilda*, i. e. a Lord's Gift: for the first use of it was from a Gift of a Horse granted by all the Subjects in *Scotland* for relieving King . . . . .  
from

from his Imprisonment in *England*. There was another Duty payable by all the Tenants to their Chief, tho they did not live upon his Lands; and this is call'd *Calpich*: there was a standing Law for it also, call'd *Calpich-Law*; and I am inform'd that this is exacted by some in the main Land to this day.

WOMEN were antiently deny'd the use of Writing in the Islands, to prevent Love-Intrigues: their Parents believ'd, that Nature was too skilful in that matter, and needed not the help of Education; and therefore that Writing would be of dangerous consequence to the weaker Sex.

THE Orators, in their Language call'd *J-Dane*, were in high esteem both in these Islands and the Continent; until within these forty Years, they sat always among the Nobles and Chiefs of Families in the *Streak* or Circle. Their Houses and little Villages were Sanctuaries, as well as Churches, and they took place before Doctors of Physick. The Orators, after the *Druids* were extinct, were brought in to preserve the Genealogy of Families, and to repeat the same at every Succession of a Chief; and upon the occasion of Marriages and Births, they made *Epithalamiums* and *Panegyrics*, which the Poet or Bard pronounc'd. The Orators by the force of their Eloquence had a powerful Ascendant over the greatest Men in their  
H 2 time;



time; for if any Orator did but ask the Habit, Arms, Horse, or any other thing belonging to the greatest Man in these Islands, it was readily granted them, sometimes out of respect, and sometimes for fear of being exclaim'd against by a Satire, which in those days was reckon'd a great dishonour: but these Gentlemen becoming insolent, lost ever since both the Profit and Esteem which was formerly due to their Character; for neither their Panegyrics nor Satires are regarded to what they have been, and they are now allow'd but a small Salary. I must not omit to relate their way of Study, which is very singular: They shut their Doors and Windows for a day's time, and lie on their backs, with a Stone upon their Belly, and Plads about their Heads, and their Eyes being cover'd, they pump their Brains for Rhetorical Encomium or Panegyrick; and indeed they furnish such a Stile from this dark Cell, as is understood by very few: and if they purchase a couple of Horses as the Reward of their Meditation, they think they have done a great matter. The Poet, or Bard, had a Title to the Bridegroom's upper Garb, that is, the Plad and Bonnet; but now he is satisfy'd with what the Bridegroom pleases to give him on such occasions.

THERE was an antient Custom in the Island of *Lewis*, to make a fiery Circle about the Houses, Corn, Cattle, &c. belonging to each

each particular Family: A Man carry'd Fire in his right hand, and went round, and it was call'd *Dessil*, from the right Hand, which in the antient Language is call'd *Dess*. An Instance of this Round was perform'd in the Village *Shadir* in *Lewis*, about sixteen years ago (as I was told) but it proved fatal to the Practiser, call'd *Mac-Callum*; for after he had carefully perform'd this Round, that very Night following he and his Family were sadly surpriz'd, and all his Houses, Corn, Cattle, &c. were consumed with Fire. This superstitious Custom is quite abolish'd now, for there has not been above this one Instance of it in forty Years past.

THERE is another way of the *Dessil*, or carrying Fire round about Women before they are churched, after Child-bearing; and it is used likewise about Children until they be christen'd: both which are perform'd in the Morning and at Night. This is only practised now by some of the antient Midwives: I enquired their Reasons for this Custom, which I told them was altogether unlawful; this disoblig'd them mightily, insomuch that they would give me no satisfaction. But others, that were of a more agreeable Temper, told me the Fire-round was an effectual means to preserve both the Mother and the Infant from the power of evil Spirits, who are ready at such times to do mischief, and sometimes

118 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

carry away the Infant; and when they get them once in their possession, return them poor meagre Skeletons: and these Infants are said to have voracious Appetites, constantly craving for Meat. In this case it was usual with those who believ'd that their Children were thus taken away, to dig a Grave in the Fields upon Quarter-Day, and there to lay the Fairy Skeleton till next Morning; at which time the Parents went to the place, where they doubted not to find their own Child instead of this Skeleton. Some of the poorer sort of People in these Islands retain the Custom of performing these Rounds Sun-ways, about the Persons of their Benefactors three times, when they bless them, and wish good success to all their Enterprizes. Some are very careful, when they set out to Sea, that the Boat be first row'd about Sun-ways; and if this be neglected, they are afraid their Voyage may prove unfortunate. I had this Ceremony paid me (when in the Island of *Ila*) by a poor Woman, after I had given her an Alms: I desired her to let alone that Compliment, for I did not care for it; but she insisted to make these three ordinary Turns, and then pray'd that God and *Mac-Charmig*, the Patron Saint of that Island, might bless and prosper me in all my Designs and Affairs.

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 119

I ATTEMPTED twice to go from *Ila* to *Collonsay*, and at both times they row'd about the Boat Sun-ways, tho I forbid them to do it; and by a contrary Wind the Boat and those in it were forc'd back. I took Boat again a third time from *Jura* to *Collonsay*, and at the same time forbid them to row about their Boat, which they obey'd; and then we landed safely at *Collonsay*, without any ill Adventure; which some of the Crew did not believe possible, for want of the Round: but this one Instance hath convinc'd them of the Vanity of this superstitious Ceremony. Another antient Custom observ'd on the second of *February*, which the Papists there yet retain, is this: The Mistress and Servants of each Family take a Sheaf of Oats, and dress it up in Womens Apparel, put it in a large Basket, and lay a wooden Club by it, and this they call *Briids-bed*; and then the Mistress and Servants cry three times, *Briid is come, Briid is welcome*. This they do just before going to bed, and when they rise in the morning they look among the Ashes, expecting to see the Impression of *Briid's Club* there; which if they do, they reckon it a true Presage of a good Crop, and prosperous Year, and the contrary they take as an ill Omen.

IT has been an antient Custom amongst the Natives, and now only used by some old  
H 4 People,

120 *A DESCRIPTION of the*  
People, to swear by their Chief or Laird's  
Hand.

WHEN a Debate arises between two Persons, if one of them assert the matter by your Father's Hand, they reckon it a great Indignity; but if they go a degree higher, and out of spite say, by your Father and Grandfather's Hand, the next Word is commonly accompany'd with a Blow.

IT is a receiv'd Opinion in these Islands, as well as in the neighbouring part of the main Land, That Women by a Charm, or some other secret way, are able to convey the Increase of their Neighbours Cows Milk to their own use; and that the Milk so charm'd, doth not produce the ordinary quantity of Butter; and the Curds made of that Milk are so tough, that it cannot be made so firm as other Cheese, and is also much lighter in weight. The Butter so taken away, and join'd to the Charmer's Butter, is evidently discernible by a Mark of Separation, *viz.* the Diversity of Colours; that which is charm'd being still paler than that part of the Butter which hath not been charm'd; and if Butter having these Marks be found with a suspected Woman, she is presently said to be guilty. Their usual way of recovering this Loss, is to take a little of the Rennet from all the suspected Persons, and to put it in an Egg-shell full of Milk; and when

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 121

when that from the Charmer is mingled with it, it presently curdles, and not before.

THIS was asserted to me by the generality of the most Judicious People in these Islands; some of them having, as they told me, come to the knowledg of it to their cost. Some Women make use of the Root of Groundsel as an Amulet against such Charms, by putting it among their Cream.

BOTH Men and Women in those Islands, and in the neighbouring main Land, affirm that the Increase of Milk is likewise taken away by Trouts; if it happen that the Dishes or Pales wherein the Milk is kept, be wash'd in the Rivulets where Trouts are. And the way to recover this Damage, is by taking a live Trout, and pouring Milk into its mouth; which they say doth presently curdle, if it was taken away by Trouts, but otherwise they say it is not.

THEY affirm likewise, that some Women have an Art to take away the Milk of Nurses.

I SAW four Women, whose Milk were try'd, that one might be chosen for a Nurse; and the Woman pitch'd upon, was after three days Suckling depriv'd of her Milk: whereupon she was sent away, and another put in her

122 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

her place; and on the third day after, she that was first chosen recover'd her Milk again. This was concluded to be the effect of Witchcraft by some of her Neighbours.

THEY also say, that some have an Art of taking away the Increase of Malt, and that the Drink made of this Malt hath neither Life nor good Taste in it; and, on the contrary, the Charmer hath very good Ale all this time. A Gentleman of my acquaintance, for the space of a Year, could not have a drop of good Ale in his House; and having complain'd of it to all that convers'd with him, he was at last advis'd to get some Yeast from every Alehouse in the Parish: and having got a little from one particular Man, he put it among his Wort, which became as good Ale as could be drank, and so defeated the Charm. After which, the Gentleman in whose Land this Man lived, banish'd him thirty six miles from thence.

THEY say there be Women who have an Art of taking a Moat out of one's Eye, tho at some miles distance from the Party griev'd; and this is the only Charm these Women will avouch themselves to understand, as some of them told me, and several of these Men, out of whose Eyes Moats were then taken, confirm'd the Truth of it to me.

ALL

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 123

ALL these Islanders, and several thousands on the neighbouring Continent, are of opinion, that some particular Persons have an evil Eye, which affects Children and Cattle: this, they say, occasions frequent Mischances, and sometimes Death. I could name some who are believ'd to have this unhappy Faculty, tho at the same time void of any ill Design. This hath been an antient Opinion, as appears from that of the Poet:

*Nescio quis teneros oculus mihi fassinat Agnos.*

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*Courts*

*Courts of Judicatory.*

**A**T the first Plantation of these Isles, all matters were manag'd by the sole Authority of the Heads of Tribes, call'd in the *Irish*, *Thiarna*, which was the same with *Tyrannus*, and now it signifies Lord or Chief; there being no Standard of Equity or Justice, but what flow'd from them. And when their Numbers increas'd, they erected Courts call'd *Mode*, and in the *Englisb*, Baron-Courts.

THE Proprietor has the Nomination of the Members of this Court; he himself is President of it, and in his absence his Bayliff: the Minister of the Parish is always a Member of it. There are no Attorneys to plead the Cause of either Party, for both Men and Women represent their respective Causes; and there is always a speedy Decision, if the Parties have their Witnesses present, &c.

THERE is a peremptory Sentence pass'd in Court for ready Payment, and if the Party against whom Judgment is given prove refractory, the other may send the common Officer, who has power to distrain, and at the same time to exact a Fine of 20 *l. Scots*, for the use of the Proprietor, and about two Marks for himself.

THE

THE Heads of Tribes had their Offensive and Defensive Leagues, call'd Bonds of *Mandrate*, and *Manrent* in the Lowlands; by which each Party was oblig'd to assist one another upon all extraordinary Emergencies. And tho' the Differences between those Chieftans involv'd several Confederates in a Civil War, yet they oblig'd themselves by the Bond mention'd above to continue stedfast in their Duty to their Sovereign.

WHEN the Proprietor gives a Farm to his Tenant, whether for one or more Years, it is customary to give the Tenant a Stick of Wood, and some Straw in his hand: this is immediately return'd by the Tenant again to his Master, and then both Parties are as much oblig'd to perform their respective Conditions, as if they had sign'd a Lease, or any other Deed.

*Church.*



## Church-Discipline.

EVERY Parish in the Western Isles has a Church-Judicature, call'd the *Consistory*, or *Kirk-Session*, where the Minister presides, and a competent number of Laymen, call'd Elders, meet with him. They take cognizance of Scandals, censure faulty Persons, and with that strictness, as to give an Oath to those who are suspected of Adultery or Fornication; for which they are to be proceeded against according to the Custom of the Country. They meet after Divine Service; the chief Heretor of the Parish is present, to concur with them, and enforce their Acts by his Authority, which is irresistible within the bounds of his Jurisdiction.

A Form of Prayer used by many of the Islanders at Sea, after the Sails are hoisted.

[This Form is contain'd in the *Irish* Liturgy compos'd by Mr. *John Ker*, afterwards Bishop of *Argyle*; printed in the Year 1566, and dedicated to the Earl of *Argyle*. I have set down the Original, for the satisfaction of such Readers as understand it.]

**M** Odb Bendaighto luingo ag dul dionsa idhe  
na fairrge.  
*Abrah aon da chaeb Marso.*  
Da.

An Stioradoir.

*Beanighidh ar Long.*

Fregra Chaich.

*Go mbeandaighe Dia Athair i.*

An Stioradoir.

*Beanoaidhidh ar Long.*

Fregra.

*Go mbeandaighe Iosa Criost i.*

An Stioradoir.

*Beanoaidhidh ar Long.*

Fregra.

*Go mbeandaighe an Shiorad Naomh i.*

An Stioradoir.

*Cred is egail Libh is Dhia Athair libh.*

Fregra.

Fregra.

*Ni heagal en ni.*

An Stioradoir.

*Cred is egil libh is Dia an Mac Libh.*

Fregra.

*Ni heagal en ni.*

An Stioradoir.

*Cred is eagail Libh is Dia an sbiorod Naomh libh.*

Fregra.

*Ni heagal en ni.*

An Stioradoir.

*Dia Athair Vile Chumhachtach ar Gradh a Mhic  
Josa Criosa, le Comh shurtach an Spioraid Naomh,  
An taon Dhia tug Claid Israel trid an Muir ruaigh  
go mirbhuileach, agus tug Jonas ad tir ambroind  
an Mhil mhoie, & tug Pol Easpol, agus a long  
gon, foirind o an fadh iomarcach, agus o dheartan  
dominde dar sa oradhne, agus dar senadh, agus dar  
mbeandrghadh, agus dar m breith le sen, agus le  
foinind, agus le solas do chum chnain, agus chalaidh  
do reir a theile diadha fein.*

*Ar ni iarmoid air ag radha.*

*Ar Nathairne ata ar Neamh, &c.*

*Abradh Cach Vile.*

*Bionh Amhluidh.*

The

The Manner of Blessing the Ship,  
when they put to Sea.

The Steers-man says,

**L**ET us bless our Ship.

The Answer by all the Crew ;  
God the Father bless her.

Steers-man.

Let us bless our Ship.

Answer.

Jesus Christ bless her.

Steers-man.

Let us bless our Ship.

Answer.

The Holy Ghost bless her.

Steers-man.

What do you fear, since God the Father is with  
you ?

Answer.

We do not fear any thing.

Steers-man.

What do you fear, since God the Son is with  
you ?

Answer.

We do not fear any thing.

Steers-man.

What are you afraid of, since God the Holy Ghost  
is with you ?

Answer.

We do not fear any thing.

I

Steers-

Steerf-man.

God the Father Almighty, for the Love of Jesus Christ his Son, by the Comfort of the Holy Ghost, the One God, who miraculously brought the Children of Israel through the Red Sea, and brought Jonas to Land out of the Belly of the Whale, and the Apostle St. Paul and his Ship to safety from the troubled raging Sea, and from the Violence of a tempestuous Storm; deliver, sanctify, bless and conduct us peaceably, calmly, and comfortably through the Sea to our Harbour, according to his Divine Will: which we beg, saying, Our Father, &c.

A Description of the Isle of SKIE.

SKIE (in the antient Language *Skianach*, i. e. wing'd) is so call'd because the two opposite Northern Promontories (*Vaterness* lying North-west, and *Troterness* North-east) resemble two Wings. This Isle lies for the most part half-way in the Western Sea, between the main Land on the East, the Shire of *Ross*; and the Western Isle of *Lewis*, &c.

THE Isle is very high Land, as well on the Coast, as higher up in the Country; and there are seven high Mountains near one another, almost in the Center of the Isle.

THIS Island is forty miles in length from South to North, and in some places twenty, and in others thirty in breadth; the whole may amount to a hundred miles in Circumference.

THE Channel between the South of *Skie* and opposite main Land (which is part of the Shire of *Inverness*) is not above three Leagues in breadth; and where the Ferry-Boat crosseth to *Glenelg* it's so narrow, that one may call for the Ferry-Boat, and be easily heard on the other side. This Isle is a part of the Sheriffdom of *Inverness*, and formerly of the Diocess of the Isles,

132 *A DESCRIPTION of the*  
Isles, which was united to that of *Argyle*: a  
South-East Moon causeth a Spring-Tide here.

THE Mold is generally black, especially  
in the Mountains; but there is some of a red  
colour, in which Iron is found.

THE arable Land is for the most part black,  
yet affords Clay of different colours; as white,  
red, and blue: the Rivulet at *Dunvegan*  
Church, and that of *Nisboft*, have Fullers-  
Earth.

THE Villages *Borve* and *Glenmore* afford  
two very fine sorts of Earth, the one red, the  
other white; and they both feel and cut like  
melted Tallow. There are other places that  
afford plenty of very fine white Marle, which  
cuts like Butter; it abounds most in *Corhatta-  
chan*, where an Experiment has been made of  
its Virtue: A quantity of it being spread on a  
sloping Hill cover'd with Heath, soon after  
all the Heath fell to the ground, as if it had  
been cut with a Knife. They afterwards sow'd  
Barley on the ground, which tho' it grew but  
unequally, some places producing no Grain,  
because perhaps it was unequally laid on; yet  
the Produce was thirty five fold, and many  
Stalks carry'd five Ears of Barley. This ac-  
count was given me by the present Possessor of  
the Ground, *Lachlin Mac-Kinon*.

THERE

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 133

THERE are *Marcasites* black and white,  
resembling silver Ore, near the Village *Sartle*:  
there are likewise in the same place several  
Stones, which in bigness, shape, &c. resemble  
Nutmegs, and many Rivulets here afford va-  
riegated Stones of all colours. The *Apples-  
glen* near *Loch-fallart* has Aggat growing in it  
of different sizes and colours; some are green  
on the out-side, some are of a pale sky-colour,  
and they all strike fire as well as Flint: I have  
one of them by me, which for shape and bigness  
is proper for a Sword-handle. Stones of a pur-  
ple colour flow down the Rivulets here after  
great Rains.

THERE is Chrystal in several places of  
this Island, as at *Portry*, *Quillin*, and *Mingnis*;  
it's of different sizes and colours, some is sex-  
angular, as that of *Quillin*, and *Mingnis*; and  
there is some in *Minrines* of a purple colour.  
The Village *Torrin* in *Strath* affords a great deal  
of good white and black Marble; I have seen  
Cups made of the white, which is very fine.  
There are large Quarries of Free-stone in feve-  
ral parts of this Isle, as at *Snisness* in *Strath*, in  
the South of *Borrie*, and Isle of *Rafay*. There is  
abundance of Lime-stone in *Strath* and *Trotter-  
ness*: some Banks of Clay on the East Coast are  
overflow'd by the Tide, and in these grow the  
*Lapis Ceranius*, or *Cerna Amomis*, of different  
shapes; some of the breadth of a Crown-piece,  
I 3 bearing

134 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

bearing an Impression resembling the Sun; some are as big as a Man's Finger, in form of a Semicircle, and furrow'd on the inner side; others are less, and have furrows of a yellow colour on both sides. These Stones are by the Natives call'd Cramp-stones, because (as they say) they cure the Cramp in Cows, by washing the part affected with Water in which this Stone has been steep'd for some hours. The *Velumnites* grow likewise in these Banks of Clay; some of 'em are twelve Inches long, and tapering towards one end: the Natives call them *Bot Stones*, because they believe them to cure the Horfes of the Worms which occasion that Distemper, by giving them Water to drink, in which this Stone has been steep'd for some hours.

THIS Stone grows likewise in the middle of a very hard grey Stone on the shore. There is a black Stone in the Surface of the Rock on *Rig-shore*, which resembles Goats Horns.

THE *Lapis Hæcticus*, or white Hætick Stone, abounds here both in the Land and Water: the Natives use this Stone as a Remedy against the *Dysenteria* and *Diarrhea*; they make them red-hot in the fire, and then quench them in Milk, and some in Water, which they drink with good success. They use this Stone after the same manner for Consumptions, and they likewise quench these Stones in Water, with which they bathe their Feet and Hands.

THE

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 135

THE Stones on which the Scurf call'd *Corkir* grows, are to be had in many places on the Coast, and in the Hills. This Scurf dyes a pretty crimson Colour; first well dry'd, and then ground to powder, after which it's steep'd in Urine, the Vessel being well secur'd from Air; and in three Weeks it's ready to boil with the Yarn that is to be dyed. The Natives observe the Decrease of the Moon for scraping this Scurf from the Stone, and say it's ripest in *August*.

THERE are many white Scurfs on Stone, somewhat like these on which the *Corkir* grows, but the *Corkir* is white, and thinner than any other that resembles it.

THERE is another coarser Scurf call'd *Croftil*; it's of a dark colour, and only dyes a *Philamot*.

THE Rocks in the Village *Ord*, have much *Talk* growing on them like the *Venice-Talk*.

THIS Isle is naturally well provided with variety of excellent Bays and Harbours. In the South of it lies the *Peninsula* call'd *Oronsa*, alias *Island Dierman*; it has an excellent Place for Anchorage on the East-side, and is generally known by most *Scots* Sea-men. About a League

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## 136 A DESCRIPTION of the

League more Easterly on the same Coast there is a small Rock, visible only at half Low-water, but may be avoided by steering through the middle of the Channel. About a League more Easterly on the same Coast, there is an Anchorage pretty near the Shore; within less than a mile further is the narrow Sound call'd the *Kyle*, in order to pass which it's absolutely necessary to have the Tide of Flood for such as are Northward bound, else they will be oblig'd to retire in disorder, because of the Violence of the Current; for no Wind is able to carry a Vessel against it. The quite contrary Course is to be observ'd by Vessels coming from the North. A mile due East from the *Kyle*, there is a big Rock, on the South side the point of Land on *Skie* side, call'd *Kaillach*, which is overflow'd by the Tide of Flood; a Vessel may go near its out-side. Above a mile further due North, there are two Rocks in the passage through the *Kyle*; they are on the Castle side, and may be avoided by keeping the middle of the Channel. About eight miles more to the Northward, or the East of *Skie*, there is secure Anchorage between the Isle *Scalpa* and *Skie* in the middle of the Channel; but one must not come to it by the South Entry of *Scalpa*: and in coming between *Rasay* and this Isle, there are Rocks without the Entry, which may be avoided best, by having a Pilot of the Country. More to the North is *Locksligichan*, on the Coast of *Skie*, where is good Anchorage; the

## Western Islands of Scotland. 137

the Entry is not deep enough for Vessels of any Burden, except at high Water: but three miles further North lies *Loch-Portry*, a capacious and convenient Harbour of above a mile in length.

THE Island *Tulm*, which is within half a mile of the Northernmost Point of *Skie*, has an Harbour on the inside. The Entrance between the Isle and *Duntulm* Castle is the best.

ON the West of the same Wing of *Skie*, and about five miles more Southerly, lies *Loch-Uge*, about a mile in length, and a very good Harbour for Vessels of the greatest burden. About two miles on this Coast further South is *Loch-saifort*; it's three miles in length, and half a mile in breadth; it is free from Rocks, and has convenient Anchorage.

ON the West side the Promontory, at the mouth of *Loch-saifort*, lies *Loch-arnisfort*, being about two miles in length, and half a mile in breadth: there are two small Isles in the mouth of the Entry, and a Rock near the West side, a little within the Entry.

SOME five miles to the West of *Arnisfort* lies *Loch-fallart*; the Entry is between *Vaternis-head* on the East side, and *Dunvegan-head* on the West side. The *Loch* is six miles in length, and about a league in breadth for some miles: it hath

## 138 A DESCRIPTION of the

hath the Island *Isa* about the middle, on the East side. There is a Rock between the North end and the Land, and there Vessels may anchor between the N. E. side of the Isle and the Land; there is also good Anchorage near *Dunvegan-Castle*, two miles further to the Southward.

*LOCH-BRAKADIL* lies two miles South of *Loch-fallart*; it is seven miles in length, and has several good Anchoring-places: on the North side the Entry lie two Rocks, call'd *Mackleod's Maidens*. About three miles South-west is *Loch-einard*, a mile in length; it has a Rock in the Entry, and is not visible but at an Ebb.

ABOUT two miles to the Eastward, there is an Anchoring-place for Barks, between *Skie* and the Isle *Soa*.

ABOUT a League further East lie *Loch-sapan* and *Loch-essort*; the first reaches about four miles to the North, and the second about six miles to the East.

THERE are several Mountains in the Isle of a considerable height and extent; as *Quillin*, *Scornisfey*, *Bein-store*, *Bein-vore-scowe*, *Bein-chro*, *Bein-nin*, *Kaillach*: some of them are cover'd with Snow on the top in Summer, others are almost quite cover'd with Sand in the top, which is much wash'd down with the great Rains.

## Western Islands of Scotland. 139

Rains. All these Mountains abound with Heath and Grass, which serve as good Pasturage for black Cattle and Sheep.

THE *Quillin*, which exceeds any of those Hills in height, is said to be the cause of much Rain, by breaking the Clouds that hover about it; which quickly after pour down in Rain upon the quarter on which the Wind then blows. There is a high Ridge of one continu'd Mountain of considerable height, and fifteen miles in length, running along the middle of the East Wing of *Skie*, call'd *Troternes*; and that part above the Sea is faced with a steep Rock.

THE arable Ground is generally along the Coast, and in the Valleys between the Mountains, having always a River running in the middle; the Soil is very grateful to the Husbandman. I have been shew'd several places that had not been till'd for seven Years before, which yielded a good Product of Oats by digging, tho the Ground was not dung'd; particularly near the Village *Kilmartin*, which the Natives told me had not been dung'd these forty Years last. Several pieces of Ground yield twenty, and some thirty fold, when dung'd with Sea-ware. I had an account, that a small Tract of Ground in the Village *Skerybreck*, yielded an hundred fold of Barley.

THE Isle of *Altig*, which is generally cover'd with Heath, being manur'd with Sea-ware,

## 140 A DESCRIPTION of the

ware, the Owner sow'd Barley in the Ground, and it yielded a very good Product; many Stalks had five Ears growing upon them. In plentiful Years, *Skie* furnishes the opposite Continent with Oats and Barley. The way of Tillage here is after the same manner that is already describ'd in the Isles of *Lewis*, &c. and digging doth always produce a better Increase here than ploughing.

ALL the Mountains in this Isle are plentifully furnish'd with variety of excellent Springs and Fountains; some of them have Rivulets, with Water-Mills upon them. The most celebrated Well in *Skie*, is *Loch-siant* Well; it is much frequented by Strangers, as well as by the Inhabitants of the Isle, who generally believe it to be a Specifick for several Diseases; such as Stitches, Head-aches, Stone, Consumptions, Megrims. Several of the common People oblige themselves by a Vow to come to this Well, and make the ordinary Tour about it, call'd *Dessil*, which is perform'd thus: They move thrice round the Well, proceeding Sunways from East to West, and so on. This is done after drinking of the Water; and when one goes away from the Well, it's a never-failing Custom, to leave some small Offering on the Stone which covers the Well. There are nine Springs issuing out of the Hill above the Well, and all of them pay the Tribute of their Water to a Rivulet that falls from the Well. There is

## Western Islands of Scotland. 141

is a little fresh-water Lake within ten Yards of the said Well; it abounds with Trouts, but neither the Natives nor Strangers will ever presume to destroy any of them, such is the Esteem they have for the Water.

THERE is a small Coppice near to the Well, and there is none of the Natives dare venture to cut the least Branch of it, for fear of some signal Judgment to follow upon it.

THERE are many Wells here esteem'd effectual to remove several Distempers. The lightest and wholesomest Water in all the Isle is that of *Tonbir Tellibreck* in *Uge*: the Natives say that the Water of this Well, and the Sea-plant call'd *Dulse*, would serve instead of Food for a considerable time, and own that they have experienc'd it in time of War. I saw a little Well in *Kilbride* in the South of *Skie*, with one Trout only in it; the Natives are very tender of it, and tho they often chance to catch it in their wooden Pales, they are very careful to preserve it from being destroy'd; it has been seen there for many Years: there is a Rivulet not far distant from the Well, to which it hath probably had access thro some narrow Passage.

THERE are many Rivers on all quarters of the Isle, about 30 of 'em afford Salmon, and some of 'em black Muscles, in which Pearl do breed; particularly the River of *Kilmartin*, and the

## 142 A DESCRIPTION of the

the River *Ord*. The Proprietor told me, that some Years ago a Pearl had been taken out of the former, valu'd at 20 *l. Sterling*. There are several Cataracts, as that in *Sker-horen, Holm, Rig* and *Tont*. When a River makes a great noise in time of fair Weather, it's a sure Prognostick here of Rain to ensue.

THERE are many fresh-water Lakes in *Skie*, and generally well stock'd with Trout and Eels. The common Fly and the Earth-worms are ordinarily used for angling Trout; the best Season for it is a Calm, or a South-west Wind.

THE largest of the fresh-water Lakes is that named after *St. Columbus*, on the account of the Chappel dedicated to that Saint; it stands in the Isle, about the middle of the Lake.

THERE is a little fresh-water Lake near the South side of *Loch-einordstard*, in which Muscles grow that breed Pearl.

THIS Isle hath antiently been cover'd all over with Woods, as appears from the great Trunks of Fir-trees, &c. dug out of the Bogs frequently, &c. There are several Coppices of Wood, scatter'd up and down the Isle; the largest call'd *Lettir-hurr*, exceeds not three miles in length.

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## Western Islands of Scotland. 143

HERRINGS are often taken in most or all the Bays mention'd above: *Loch-essort, Slapan, Loch-fallart, Loch-scowsar*, and the *Kyle of Scalpa*, are generally known to Strangers, for the great quantities of Herring taken in them. This sort of Fish is commonly seen without the Bays, and on the Coast all the Summer. All other Fish follow the Herring and their Fry, from the Whale to the least Fish that swims; the biggest still destroying the lesser.

THE Fishers and others told me, that there is a big Herring almost double the size of any of its kind, which leads all that are in a Bay, and the Shoal follows it wherever it goes. This Leader is by the Fishers call'd the King of Herring, and when they chance to catch it alive, they drop it carefully into the Sea; for they judg it Petty Treason to destroy a Fish of that name.

THE Fishers say, that all sorts of Fish, from the greatest to the least, have a Leader, who is follow'd by all of its kind.

IT is a general Observation all *Scotland* over, that if a Quarrel happen on the Coast where Herring is caught, and that Blood be drawn violently, then the Herring go away from the Coast, without returning during that Season. This, they say, has been observ'd in all

144 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

all past Ages, as well as at present; but this I relate only as a common Tradition, and submit it to the Judgment of the Learned.

THE Natives preserve and dry their Herring without Salt, for the space of eight Months, provided they be taken after the tenth of *September*: they use no other Art in it, but take out their Guts, and then tying a Rush about their necks, hang them by pairs upon a Rope made of Heath cross a House; and they eat well, and free from Putrefaction, after eight months keeping in this manner. Cod, Ling, Herring, Mackrel, Haddock, Whiting, Turbat, together with all other Fish that are in the *Scots Seas*, abound on the Coasts of this Island.

THE best time of taking Fish with an Angle is in warm Weather, which disposes them to come near the Surface of the Water; whenas in cold Weather, or Rain, they go to the bottom. The best Bait for Cod and Ling is a piece of Herring, Whiting, Thornback, Haddock, or Eel. The Grey-Lord, *alias* Black-mouth, a Fish of the size and shape of a Salmon, takes the Limpet for Bait. There is another way of angling for this Fish, by fastening a short white Down of a Goose behind the Hook; and the Boat being continually row'd, the Fish run greedily after the Down, and are easily caught. The Grey-Lord swims in the  
Surface

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 145

Surface of the Water, and then is caught with a Spear; a Rope being ty'd to the further end of it, and secur'd in the Fisherman's hand.

ALL the Bays and Places of Anchorage here abound with most kinds of Shell-fish. The *Kyle of Scalpa* affords Oysters in such plenty, that commonly a Spring-Tide of Ebb leaves fifteen, sometimes twenty Horse-load of them on the Sands.

THE Sands on the Coast of *Bernstill* Village at the Spring-Tides afford daily such plenty of Muscles, as is sufficient to maintain sixty Persons *per day*: and this was a great Support to many poor Families of the Neighbourhood, in the late Years of Scarcity. The Natives observe that all Shell-fish are plumper at the Increase than Decrease of the Moon; they observe likewise that all Shell-fish are plumper during a South-west Wind, than when it blows from the North or North-east Quarters.

THE Limpet being parboil'd with a very little quantity of Water, the Broth is drank to increase Milk in Nurses, and likewise when the Milk proves astringent to the Infants. The Broth of the black Periwinkle is used in the same cases. It's observ'd, that Limpets being frequently eat in *June*, are apt to occasion the Jaundice; the Outside of the Fish is colour'd like the Skin of a Person that has the Jaundice:

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## 146 A DESCRIPTION of the

the tender yellow part of the Limpet, which is next to the Shell, is reckon'd good Nourishment, and very easy of Digestion.

I HAD an Account of a poor Woman, who was a Native of the Isle of *Jura*, and by the Troubles in King *Charles* the First's Reign was almost reduc'd to a starving Condition; so that she lost her Milk quite, by which her Infant had nothing proper for its Sustenance: upon this she boil'd some of the tender Fat of the Limpets, and gave it to her Infant, to whom it became so agreeable, that it had no other Food for several Months together; and yet there was not a Child in *Jura*, or any of the adjacent Isles, wholesomer than this poor Infant, which was expos'd to so great a Strait.

THE Limpet creeps on the Stone and Rock in the night-time, and in a warm Day; but if any thing touch the Shell, it instantly clings to the Stone, and then no hand is able to pluck it off without some Instrument: and therefore such as take 'em have little Hammers, call'd Limpet-hammers, with which they beat it from the Rock; but if they watch its motion, and surprize it, the least Touch of the Hand pulls it away: and this that is taken creeping, they say, is larger and better than that which is pull'd off by force. The Motion, Fixation, Taste and Feeding, &c. of this little Animal being very curious, I have here exhibited its  
Figure,

## Western Islands of Scotland. 147

Figure, for the satisfaction of the inquisitive Reader.

I HAVE likewise here exhibited the Figure of the *Balanos*, growing on Stone and Shells; in which, very small *Wilks* are found to lodg and grow.

THE pale *Wilk*, which in length and smallness exceeds the black Periwinkle, and by the Natives call'd *Gil-sunt*, is by them beat in pieces, and both Shell and Fish boil'd; the Broth being strain'd, and drank for some days together, is accounted a good Remedy against the Stone: it is call'd a *Dead-Man's-Eye* at *Dover*. It is observ'd of Cockles and Spoutfish, that they go deeper in the Sands with North Winds, than any other; and on the contrary, they are easier reach'd with South Winds, which are still warmest.

IT is a general Observation of all such as live on the Sea-Coast, that they are more prolific than any other People whatsoever.

The Sea-Plants here, are as follows.

**L**INARICH, a very thin small green Plant, about eight, ten, or twelve inches in length; it grows on Stone, on Shells, and on the bare Sand. This Plant is apply'd Plaister-wise to the Forehead and Temples, to procure Sleep for such as have a Fever, and they say it is effectual for this purpose.

THE *Linarich* is likewise apply'd to the Crown of the Head and Temples, for removing the Megrin, and also to heal the Skin after a Blister-Plaister of *Flammula Jovis*.

SLAKE, a very thin Plant, almost round, about ten or twelve inches in circumference, grows on the Rocks and Sands; the Natives eat it boil'd, and it dissolves into Oil: they say, that if a little Butter be added to it, one might live many Years on this alone, without Bread, or any other Food, and at the same time undergo any laborious Exercise. This Plant, boil'd with some Butter, is given to Cows in the Spring, to remove Costiveness.

DULSE

DULSE is of a reddish brown colour, about ten or twelve inches long, and above half an inch in breadth: it is eat raw, and then reckon'd to be loosening, and very good for the Sight; but if boil'd, it proves more loosening, if the Juice be drank with it. This Plant apply'd Plaister-wise to the Temples, is reckon'd effectual against the Megrin: the Plant boil'd, and eat with its Infusion, is used against the Cholick and Stone; and dry'd without washing it in water, pulveriz'd and given in any convenient Vehicle fasting, it kills Worms: the Natives eat it boil'd with Butter, and reckon it very wholesom. The *Dulse* recommended here, is that which grows on Stone, and not that which grows on the *Alga Marina*, or *Sea-Tangle*; for tho that be likewise eaten, it will not serve in any of the Cases above mention'd.

THE *Alga Marina*, or *Sea-Tangle*, or, as some call it, *Sea-ware*, is a Rod about four, six, eight or ten foot long; having at the end a Blade commonly slit into seven or eight pieces, and about a foot and half in length: it grows on Stone, the Blade is eat by the vulgar Natives. I had an account of a young Man who had lost his Appetite, and taken Pills to no purpose; and being advis'd to boil the Blade of the *Alga*, and drink the Infusion boil'd with a little Butter, was restor'd to his former State of Health.

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THERE is abundance of white and red Coral growing on the South and West Coast of this Isle; it grows on the Rocks, and is frequently interwoven with the Roots of the *Alga*: the red seems to be a good fresh Colour when first taken out of the Sea, but in a few hours after it becomes pale. Some of the Natives take a quantity of the red Coral, adding the Yolk of an Egg roasted to it, for the Diarrhea. Both the red and white Coral here is not above five inches long, and about the bigness of a Goose-Quill.

THERE are many Caves to be seen on each quarter of this Isle, some of them are believ'd to be several miles in length: there is a big Cave in the Village *Bornskittag*, which is suppos'd to exceed a mile in length. The Natives told me that a Piper, who was over-curious, went into the Cave with a design to find out the length of it; and after he enter'd, began to play on his Pipe, but never return'd to give an account of his Progress.

THERE is a Cave in the Village *Kigg*, wherein Drops of Water that issue from the Roof petrify into a white limy Substance, and hang down from the Roof and Sides of the Cave.

THERE

THERE is a Cave in the Village *Holm*, having many petrify'd Twigs hanging from the top; they are hollow from one end to the other, and from five to ten inches in length.

THERE is a big Cave in the Rock on the East side of *Portry*, large enough for eighty Persons: there is a Well within it, which, together with its Situation and narrow Entry, renders it an inaccessible Fort; one Man only can enter it at a time, by the side of a Rock, so that with a Staff in his hand he is able by the least touch to cast over the Rock as many as shall attempt to come into the Cave.

ON the South side *Loch-Portry*, there is a large Cave, in which many Sea-Cormorants do build: the Natives carry a bundle of Straw to the door of the Cave in the night-time, and there setting it on fire, the Fowls fly with all speed to the Light, and so are caught in Baskets laid for that purpose. The Golden Cave in *Sleat* is said to be seven miles in length, from the West to East.

THERE are many Cairns, or Heaps of Stones in this Island. Some of the Natives say they were erected in the times of *Heathenism*, and that the antient Inhabitants worship'd about them. In Popish Countries, the People

152 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

still retain the antient Custom of making a Tour round them.

OTHERS say, these Cairns were erected where Persons of Distinction, kill'd in Battle, had been bury'd, and that their Urns were laid in the ground under the Cairns. I had an account of a Cairn in *Knapdale* in the Shire of *Argyle*, underneath which an Urn was found. There are little Cairns to be seen in some places on the common Road, which were made only where Corps happen'd to rest for some minutes; but they have laid aside the making such Cairns now.

THERE is an erected Stone in *Kilbride* in *Strath*, which is ten foot high, and one and a half broad.

THERE is another of five foot high plac'd in the middle of the Cairn, on the South side *Loch-Uge*, and is call'd the high Stone of *Uge*.

THERE are three such Stones on the Sea-Coast opposite to *Skeriness*, each of them three foot high: the Natives have a Tradition, that upon these Stones a big Caldron was set, for boiling *Fin-Mac-Coal's* Meat. This Gigantick Man is reported to have been General of a Militia that came from *Spain* to *Ireland*, and from thence to those Isles: all his Soldiers are call'd

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 153

call'd *Fienty* from *Fiun*. He is believ'd to have arriv'd in the Isles, in the Reign of King *Evan*: the Natives have many Stories of this General and his Army, with which I will not trouble the Reader. He is mention'd in Bishop *Lefly's* History.

THERE are many Forts erected on the Coast of this Isle, and suppos'd to have been built by the *Danes*: they are call'd by the name of *Dun*, from *Dain*, which in the antient Language signify'd a Fort; they are round in form, and they have a Passage all round within the Wall: the Door of 'em is low, and many of the Stones are of such bulk, that no number of the present Inhabitants could raise them without an Engine.

ALL these Forts stand upon Eminences, and are so dispos'd, that there is not one of them, which is not in view of some other; and by this means, when a Fire is made upon a Beacon in any one Fort, it's in a few moments after communicated to all the rest: and this hath been always observ'd upon sight of any number of foreign Vessels, or Boats approaching the Coast.

THE Forts are commonly named after the place where they are, or the Person that built them; as *Dun-Skudborg*, *Dun-Derig*, *Dun-Skeriness*, *Dun-David*, &c.

THERE

THERE are several little stone Houses, built under ground, call'd Earth-houses, which serv'd to hide a few People and their Goods in time of War; the Entry to them was on the Sea or River-side: there is one of them in the Village *Lachsay*, and another in *Camstinrag*.

THERE are several little stone Houses built above ground, capable only of one Person, and round in form; one of 'em is to be seen in *Portry*, another at *Lincro*, and at *Culaknock*: they are call'd *Tey-nin-druinich*, i. e. *Druids-house*. *Druinich* signifies a retired Person, much devoted to Contemplation.

THE Fewel used here is Peats dug out of the Heaths: there are Cakes of Iron found in the Ashes of some of 'em, and at *Flodgery* Village there are Peats from which Salt-peter sparkles. There is a Coal lately discover'd at *Holm* in *Portry*, some of which I have seen; there are pieces of Coal dug out likewise of the Sea-Sand in *Heldersta* of *Vaternis*, and some found in the Village *Mogstar*.

THE Cattel produc'd here are Horses, Cows, Sheep, Goats and Hogs. The common Work-Horses are expos'd to the Rigour of the Season during the Winter and Spring; and tho they have neither Corn, Hay, or but seldom Straw, yet they undergo all the Labour that other Horses better treated are liable to.

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THE Cows are likewise expos'd to the Rigour of the coldest Seasons, and become mere Skeletons in the Spring, many of them not being able to rise from the ground without help; but they recover as the Season becomes more favourable, and the Grass grows up; then they acquire new Beef, which is both sweet and tender; the Fat and Lean is not so much separated in them as in other Cows, but as it were larded, which renders it very agreeable to the Taste. A Cow in this Isle may be twelve Years old, when at the same time its Beef is not above four, five, or six Months old. When a Calf is slain, it's an usual Custom to cover another Calf with its Skin, to suck the Cow whose Calf hath been slain, or else she gives no Milk, nor suffers her self to be approach'd by any body; and if she discover the Cheat, then she grows enrag'd for some days, and the last Remedy used to pacify her, is to use the sweetest Voice, and sing all the time of milking her. When any Man is troubled with his Neighbours Cows, by breaking into his Inclosures, he brings all to the utmost Boundary of his Ground, and there drawing a quantity of Blood from each Cow, he leaves them upon the spot, from whence they go away, without ever returning again to trouble him, during all that Season. The Cows often feed upon the *Alga Marina*, or Sea-ware; and they can exactly distinguish the Tide of Ebb from the Tide



## 156 A DESCRIPTION of the

Tide of Flood, tho at the same time they are not within view of the Sea; and if one meet them running to the Shore at the Tide of Ebb, and offer to turn them again to the Hills to graze, they will not return. When the Tide has ebb'd about two hours, so as to uncover the Sea-ware, then they steer their course directly to the nearest Coast, in their usual Order, one after another, whatever their number be: there are as many Instances of this, as there are Tides of Ebb on the shore. I had occasion to make this Observation thirteen times in one Week; for tho the Natives gave me repeated Assurances of the Truth of it, I did not fully believe it, till I saw many Instances of it in my Travels along the Coast. The Natives have a Remark, that when the Cows belonging to one Person do of a sudden become very irregular, and run up and down the fields, and make a loud noise, without any visible cause, that it is a Presage of the Master's or Mistress's Death; of which there were several late Instances given me. *James Mackdonald of Capstil* having been kill'd at the Battle of *Kelicranky*; it was observed that night, that his Cows gave Blood instead of Milk; his Family and other Neighbours concluded this a bad Omen. The Minister of the Place, and the Mistress of the Cows, together with several Neighbours, assured me of the Truth of this.

THERE

## Western Islands of Scotland. 157

THERE was a Calf brought forth in *Vaternis* without Legs; it leap'd very far, below'd louder than any other Calf, and drank much more Milk: at last the Owner kill'd it. *Kenneth* the Carpenter, who lives there, told me that he had seen the Calf. I was also inform'd, that a Cow in *Vaternis* brought forth five Calves at a time, of which three died.

THERE was a Calf at *Skeriness*, having all its Legs double, but the Bones had but one Skin to cover both; the Owner fancying it to be ominous, kill'd it, after having lived nine Months. Several of the Natives thereabouts told me that they had seen it.

THERE are several Calves that have a slit in the top of their Ears, and these the Natives fancy to be the Issue of a wild Bull, that comes from the Sea or fresh Lakes; and this Calf is by them call'd *Corky-fyre*.

THERE's plenty of Land and Water-Fowl in this Isle; as Hawks, Eagles of two kinds, the one grey and of a larger size, the other much less and black, but more destructive to young Cattle; Black-cock, Heath-hen, Plovers, Pigeons, Wild-Geese, Tarmagan, and Cranes: of this latter sort, I have seen sixty on the shore in a Flock together. The Sea-Fowls are Malls of all kinds, Coulterneb, Guillamot,

## 158 A DESCRIPTION of the

mot, Sea-Cormorant, &c. The Natives observe that the latter, if perfectly black, makes no good Broth, nor is its Flesh worth eating; but that a Cormorant, which has any white Feathers or Down, makes good Broth, and the Flesh of it is good Food, and the Broth is usually drunk by Nurfes to increase their Milk.

THE Natives observe, that this Fowl flutters with its Wings towards the Quarter from which the Wind is soon after to blow.

THE Sea-Fowl *Bunivochil*, or, as some Seamen call it, *Carara*, and others *Bishop*, is as big as a Goose, of a brown colour, and the inside of the Wings white; the Bill is long and broad, and it is footed like a Goose; it dives quicker than any other Fowl whatever, it's very fat. The Case of this Fowl being flay'd off with the Fat, and a little Salt laid on to preserve it, and then apply'd to the Thigh-bone, where it must lie for some Weeks together, is an effectual Remedy against the Sciatica; of which I saw two Instances. It is observ'd of Fire-Arms that are rubb'd over (as the custom is here) with the Oil or Fat of Sea-Fowls, that they contract Rust much sooner, than when done with the Fat of Land-Fowl; the *Fulmar*-Oil from *St. Kilda* only excepted, which preserves Iron from contracting Rust much longer than any other Oil or Grease whatsoever. The Natives observe, that when the Sea-Pye warbles  
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## Western Islands of Scotland. 159

its Notes incessantly, it is a sure Presage of fair Weather to follow in a few hours after.

THE *Amphibia* to be seen in this Isle, are Seals, Otters, Vipera, Frogs, Toads and Asps. The Otter shuts its Eyes when it eats; and this is a considerable disadvantage to it, for then several ravenous Fowls lay hold on this opportunity, and rob it of its Fish.

THE Hunters say, there is a big Otter above the ordinary size, with a white Spot on its Breast, and this they call the King of Otters; it is rarely seen, and very hard to be kill'd: Seamen ascribe great Virtues to the Skin; for they say that it is fortunate in Battle, and that Victory is always on its side. Serpents abound in several parts of this Isle; there are three kinds of them, the first black and white spotted, which is the most poisonous, and if a speedy Remedy be not made use of after the Wound given, the Party is in danger. I had an account that a Man at *Glenmore*, a Boy at *Portry*, and a Woman at *Loch-scab-vag*, did all die of Wounds given by this sort of Serpents. Some believe that the Serpents wound with the Sting only, and not with their Teeth; but this Opinion is founded upon a bare Conjecture, because the Sting is exposed to view, but the Teeth very rarely seen: they are secur'd within a Hose of Flesh, which prevents their being broke; the end of them being hook'd and exceeding

ceeding small, would soon be destroy'd, if it had not been for this Fence that Nature has given them. The longest of the black Serpents mention'd above, is from two to three, or at most four foot long.

THE yellow Serpent with brown Spots, is not so poisonous, nor so long as the black and white one.

THE brown Serpent is of all three the least poisonous, and smallest and shortest in size.

THE Remedies used here to extract the Poison of Serpents, are various. The Rump of a House-Cock stript of its Feathers, and apply'd to the Wound, doth powerfully extract the Poison, if timely apply'd. The Cock is observ'd after this to swell to a great bulk, far above its former size, and being thrown out into the Fields, no ravenous Bird or Beast will ever offer to taste of it.

THE fork'd Sting taken out of an Adder's Tongue, is by the Natives steep'd in water, with which they wash and cure the Wound.

THE Serpent's Head that gives the Wound, being apply'd, is found to be a good Remedy.

NEW Cheese apply'd timely, extracts the Poison well.

THERE

THERE are two sorts of *Weasles* in the Isle, one of which exceeds that of the common size in bigness; the Natives say that the breath of it kills Calves, and Lambs, and that the lesser sort is apt to occasion a decay in such as frequently have them tame about them; especially such as suffer them to suck and lick about their mouths.

*The Inferiour Isles about SKIE.*

SOA-BRETTIL lies within a quarter of a Mile to the South of the Mountain *Quillin*; it's five Miles in Circumference, and full of Bogs, and fitter for Pasturage than Cultivation. About a Mile on the West side it is cover'd with Wood, and the rest consists of Heath and Grass, having a mixture of the *Mertillo* all over. The Red Garden-Currants grow in this Isle, and are suppos'd to have been carried thither by Birds. There has been no Venomous Creature ever seen in this little Isle, until within these two years last, that a black and white big Serpent was seen by one of the Inhabitants who kill'd it; they believe it came from the opposite Coast of *Skie*, where there are many big Serpents. There is abundance of *Cod* and *Ling* round this Isle.

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## 162 A DESCRIPTION of the

ON the South of *Sleat* lies Island *Oronsa*, which is a *Peninsula* at low water; it's a Mile in Circumference, and very fruitful in Corn, and Grass. As for the latter, it's said to excel any piece of Ground of its extent in those Parts.

IN the North Entry to *Kyle-Akin*, lie several small Isles; the biggest and next to *Skie* is *Ilan Nin Gillin*, about half a Mile in Circumference, cover'd all over with long Heath, and the *Erica Baccifera*: there is abundance of *Seals*, and *Sea-Fowls* about it.

A LEAGUE further North lies the Isle *Pabbay*, about two Miles in Circumference; it excels in Pasturage, the Cows in it afford near double the Milk that they yield in *Skie*. In the Dog-Days there is a big Fly in this Isle, which infests the Cows, makes them run up and down, discomposes them exceedingly, and hinders their Feeding, infomuch that they must be brought out of the Isle, to the Isle of *Skie*. This Isle affords abundance of *Lobsters*, *Limpets*, *Wilks*, *Crabs*, and ordinary *Sea-Plants*.

ABOUT half a League further North lies the small Isle *Gilliman*, being a quarter of a Mile in Circumference; the whole is cover'd with long Heath, and the *Erica Baccifera*. Within a call further North lies the Isle *Scalpa*, very near to *Skie*, five Miles in Circumference; it is moun-

## Western Islands of Scotland. 163

mountainous from the South end, almost to the North end, it has Wood in several parts of it; the South end is most arable, and is fruitful in Corn and Grass.

ABOUT a Mile further North is the Isle *Rafay*, being seven Miles in length, and three in breadth, sloping on the West and East sides; it has some Wood on all the Quarters of it, the whole is fitter for Pasturage than Cultivation, the Ground being generally very unequal, but very well watered with Rivulets and Springs. There's a Spring running down the face of a high Rock on the East side of the Isle; it petrifies into a white Substance, of which very fine Lime is made, and there's a great quantity of it. There's a Quarry of good Stone on the same side of the Isle; there is abundance of Caves on the West side, which serve to lodg several Families; who for their convenience in Grazing, Fishing, &c. resort thither in the Summer. On the West side, particularly near to the Village *Clachan*, the Shoar abounds with smooth Stones of different sizes, variegated all over. The same Cattle, Fowl and Fish are produc'd here, that are found in the Isle of *Skie*. There is a Law observ'd by the Natives, that all their Fishing-Lines must be of equal length; for the longest is always suppos'd to have best access to the Fish, which would prove a disadvantage to such as might have shorter ones.

THERE are some Forts in this Isle, the highest is in the South end, it is a Natural Strength, and in form like the Crown of a Hat; it's called *Dun-Cann*, which the Natives will needs have to be from one *Canne*, Cousin to the King of *Denmark*. The other lies on the side, is an Artificial Fort, three Stories high, and is called *Castle Vreokle*.

THE Proprietor of the Isle is Mr. *Mack-Leod*, a Cadet of the Family of that Name; his Seat is in the Village *Clachan*, the Inhabitants have as great veneration for him, as any Subjects can have for their King. They preserve the Memory of the deceased Ladies of the Place, by erecting a little Pyramid of Stone for each of them, with the Lady's Name. These Pyramids are by them called *Crosses*; several of them are built of Stone and Lime, and have three steps of gradual ascent to 'em. There are eight such *Crosses* about the Village, which is adorn'd with a little Tower, and lesser Houses, and an Orchard with several sorts of Berries, Pot-herbs, &c. The Inhabitants are all *Protestants*, and use the same Language, Habit, and Diet, with the Natives of *Skie*.

ABOUT a quarter of a Mile further North lies the Isle *Rona*, which is three Miles in length: Vessels pass thro the narrow Channel between

between *Rosay* and *Rona*. This little Isle is the most unequal rocky piece of Ground to be seen any where; there's but very few Acres fit for digging, the whole is covered with long Heath, *Erica-baccifera*, *Mertillus*, and some mixture of Grass; it is reckoned very fruitful in Pasturage: most of the Rocks consist of the *Hectic Stone*, and a considerable part of 'em is of a Red Colour.

THERE is a Bay on the *South-west* end of the Isle, with two Entries, the one is on the *West-side*, the other on the *South*, but the latter is only accessible; it has a Rock within the Entry, and a good Fishing.

ABOUT three Leagues to the *North-west* of *Rona*, is the Isle *Fladda*, being almost join'd to *Skie*; it is all plain arable Ground, and about a Mile in Circumference.

ABOUT a Mile to the *North*, lies the Isle *Altvig*, it has a high Rock facing the *East*, is near two Miles in Circumference, and is reputed fruitful in Corn and Grass; there is a little old Chappel in it, dedicated to *St. Tuos*. There is a Rock of about forty Yards in length at the *North-end* of the Isle, distinguished for its commodiousness in Fishing. *Herrings* are seen about this Rock in great Numbers all Summer, insomuch that the Fisher-boats are sometimes as it were entangled among the shoals of them.



## 166 A DESCRIPTION of the

THE Isle of *Troda* lies within half a League to the Northermost point of *Skie*, called *Hunish*; it is two Miles in Circumference, fruitful in Corn, and Grass, and had a Chappel dedicated to *St. Columbus*. The Natives told me, that there is a couple of Ravens in the Isle, which suffer none other of their kind to come thither; and when their own Young are able to fly, they beat them also away from the Isle.

*FLADDA-Chuan* (i. e.) *Fladda* of the Ocean, lies about two Leagues distant from the *West-side* of *Hunish-point*; it is two Miles in Compass, the Ground is boggy, and but indifferent for Corn or Grass: the Isle is much frequented for the plenty of Fish of all kinds, on each quarter of it. There are very big *Whales* which pursue the Fish on the Coast; the Natives distinguish one *Whale* for its bigness above all others, and told me that it had many big Limpets growing upon its Back, and that the Eyes of it were of such a prodigious bigness, as struck no small Terror into the Beholders. There is a Chappel in the Isle dedicated to *St. Columbus*, it has an Altar in the *East-end*, and there is a blue Stone of a round Form on it, which is always moist. It is an ordinary Custom, when any of the Fishermen are detain'd in the Isle, by contrary Winds, to wash the blue Stone with Water all round, expecting thereby to procure a favourable Wind, which the credulous Tenant living

## Western Islands of Scotland. 167

living in the Isle says never fails, especially if a Stranger wash the Stone: The Stone is likewise applied to the sides of People troubled with Stitches, and they say it is effectual for that purpose. And so great is the regard they have for this Stone, that they swear decisive Oaths on it.

THE Monk *O Gorgon* is buried near to this Chappel, and there is a Stone five foot high at each end of his Grave. There's abundance of Sea-fowl that come to hatch their Young in the Isle; the *Coulter-nebs* are very numerous here, it comes in the middle of *March*, and goes away in the middle of *August*: it makes a Tour round the Isle Sunways, before it settles on the Ground, and another at going away in *August*; which Ceremony is much approved by the Tenant of the Isle, and is one of the chief Arguments, he made use of for making the like round, as he sets out to Sea with his Boat.

THERE is a great Flock of *Plovers*, that come to this Isle from *Skie*, in the beginning of *September*; they return again in *April*, and are said to be near two thousand in all: I told the Tenant he might have a Couple of these at every Meal during the Winter and Spring, but my motion seem'd very disagreeable to him; for he declared that he had never once attempted to take any of them, tho he might if he would:

168 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

and at the same time told me, he wondred how I could imagine, that he would be so barbarous as to take the lives of such innocent Creatures as came to him only for Self-preservation.

THERE are six or seven Rocks within distance of a Musket-shot, on the *South-east* side the Isle, the Sea running between each of them: that lying more *Easterly* is the Fort called *Bord Cruin*, (i. e.) a round Table, from its round Form; it is about three hundred Paces in Circumference, flat in the top, has a deep Well within it, the whole is surrounded with a steep Rock, and has only one Place that is accessible by climbing, and that only by one Man at a time: there is a violent Current of a Tide on each side of it, which contributes to render it an impregnable Fort, it belongs to Sir *Donald Mac Donald*. One single Man above the Entry, without being expos'd to shot, is able, with a Staff in his hand, to keep off five hundred Attackers; for one only can climb the Rock at a time, and that not without difficulty.

THERE is a high Rock on the *West-side* the Fort, which may be secured also by a few hands.

ABOUT half a League on the *South-side* the round Table, lies the Rock called *Jeskar*, (i. e.) *Fisber*, because many Fishing-boats resort to it; it

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 169

it is not higher than a small Vessel under Sail. This Rock affords a great Quantity of Scurvy-grass, of an extraordinary Size, and very thick; the Natives eat it frequently, as well boil'd as raw: two of them told me that they happen'd to be confin'd there, for the space of thirty hours, by a contrary Wind; and being without Victuals, fell to eating this Scurvy-grass, and finding it of a sweet Taste, far different from the Land Scurvy-grass, they eat a large Basket full of it, which did abundantly satisfy their Appetites until their return home: They told me also that it was not in the least windy, or any other way troublesome to them.

ISLAND *Tulm* on the *West* of the Wing of *Skie*, called *Troterness*, lies within a Musquet-shot of the Castle of the Name; it is a hard Rock, and clothed with Grass; there are two Caves on the *West-side*, in which abundance of *Sea-Cormorants* build and hatch.

ABOUT 5 Leagues to the *South-west* from *Tulm* lies the Island *Ascrib*, which is divided into several Parts by the Sea; it is about two Miles in Compass, and affords very good Pasturage; all kind of Fish abound in the neighbouring Sea. On the *South-west* Side of the Isle *Ascrib*, at the distance of two Leagues, lie the two small Isles of *Timan*, directly in the mouth of *Loch-arnisfort*; they are only fit for Pasturage.

ON

## 170 A DESCRIPTION of the

ON the *West-side* of *Vaternis* Promontory, within the Mouth of *Loch-fallart*, lies *Isa*, two Miles in Compass, being fruitful in Corn and Grass, and is commodious for fishing of Cod and Ling.

THERE are two small Isles, called *Mingoy*, on the *North-east* Side of this Isle, which afford good Pasturage.

THERE is a red short kind of *Dulse*, growing in the *South-end* of the Isle, which occasions a Pain in the Head when eaten, a Property not known in any other *Dulse* whatever.

THE two Isles *Bnia* and *Harlas*, lie in the Mouth of *Loch-Brackadil*; they are both pretty high Rocks, each of them about a Mile in Circumference, they afford good Pasturage, and there are red Currants in these small Isles, supposed to have been carry'd there at first by Birds.

THE *Southern* Parts of *Skie*, as *Sleat* and *Strath*, are a Month earlier with their Grass than the *Northern* Parts; and this is the reason that the Cattle and Sheep, &c. bring forth their Young sooner than in the *North-side*.

THE Days in Summer are much longer here than in the *South* of *England*, or *Scotland*, and the Nights shorter, which about the Summer Sol-  
stice

## Western Islands of Scotland. 171

*stice* is not above an hour and an half in length; and the further we come *South*, the contrary is to be observ'd in Proportion.

THE Air here is commonly moist and cold; this disposes the Inhabitants to take a larger Dose of Brandy or other strong Liquors, than in the *South* of *Scotland*, by which they fancy that they qualify the Moisture of the Air: this is the Opinion of all Strangers, as well as of the Natives, since the one as well as the other drinks at least treble the Quantity of Brandy in *Skie* and the adjacent Isles, that they do in the more *Southern* Climate.

THE Height of the Mountains contributes much to the Moisture of the Place, but more especially the Mountain *Quillin*, which is the Husbandman's Almanack; for it is commonly observ'd, that if the Heavens above that Mountain be clear and without Clouds in the Morning, then it is not doubted but the Weather will prove fair; & *e contra*, the Height of that Hill reaching to the Clouds breaks them, and then they presently after fall down in great Rains according as the Wind blows: thus when the Wind blows from the *South*, then all the Ground lying to the *North* of *Quillin* Hills is wet with Rains, whereas all the other three Quarters are dry.

THE

THE *South-west* Winds are observ'd to carry more Rain with them than any other, and blow much higher in the most *Northern* Point of *Skie*, than they do two Miles further *South*: for which I could perceive no visible Cause, unless it be the Height of the Hill, about two Miles *South* from that Point; for after we come to the *South-side* of it, the Wind is not perceived to be so high as on the *North-side* by half.

IT'S observ'd of the *East-wind*, that tho' it blow but very gentle in the Isle of *Skie*, and on the *West-side* of it, for the space of about three or four Leagues towards the *West*, yet as we advance more *Westerly*, it is sensibly higher; and when we come near to the Coast of the more *Western* Isles of *Ulst*, *Harries*, &c. it is observ'd to blow very fresh, tho' at the same time it is almost calm on the *West-side* the Isle *Skie*. The Wind is attended with fair Weather, both in this and other *Western* Isles.

THE Sea, in time of a Calm, is observed to have a rising Motion, before the *North-wind* blows, which it has not before the approaching of any other Wind.

THE *North-wind* is still colder, and more destructive to Corn, Cattle, &c. than any other.

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WOMEN observe that their Breasts contract to a lesser bulk when the Wind blows from the *North*, and that then they yield less Milk, than when it blows from any other Quarter; and they make the like observation in other Creatures that give Milk.

THEY observe that when the Sea yields a kind of pleasant and sweet Scent, it is a sure preface of fair Weather to ensue.

THE Wind in Summer blows stronger by Land, than by Sea, and the contrary in Winter.

IN the Summer, the Wind is sometimes observed to blow from different Quarters at the same time: I have seen two Boats sail quite contrary ways, until they came within less than a League of each other, and then one of them was becalm'd, and the other continu'd to sail forward.

THE Tide of Ebb here runs *Southerly*, and the Tide of Flood *Northerly*, where no Head Lands or Promontories are in the way to interpose; for in such cases the Tides are observed to hold a course quite contrary to the ordinary motion in these Isles, and the opposite main Land: This is observed between the *East-side* of *Skie* and the opposite Continent, where the  
Tide

174 *A DESCRIPTION of the*  
Tide of Ebb runs *Northerly*, and the Tide of Flood *Southerly*, as far as *Killach-stone*, on the *South-east* of *Skie*; both Tides running directly contrary to what is to be seen in all the *Western Isles*, and opposite Continent. The Natives at *Kylakin* told me, that they had seen three different Ebbings successively on that part of *Skie*.

THE Tide of Ebb is always greater with *North-winds*, than when it blows from any other Quarter; and the Tide of Flood is always higher with *South-winds*, than any other.

THE two chief Spring-tides are on the tenth of *September*, and on the tenth or twentieth of *March*.

THE Natives are very much dispos'd to observe the influence of the Moon on human Bodies, and for that cause they never dig their Peats but in the *Decrease*; for they observe that if they are cut in the *Increase*, they continue still moist, and never burn clear, nor are they without *Smok*, but the contrary is daily observed of Peats cut in the *Increase*.

THEY make up their earthen Dykes, in the *Decrease* only, for such as are made at the *Increase* are still observed to fall.

THEY

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 175

THEY fell their Timber, and cut their Rushes in time of the *Decrease*.

The Diseases, known and not known in SKIE, and the adjacent Isles.

THE Gout, Corns in the Feet, Convulsions, Madness, Fits of the Mother, Vapours, Palsy, Lethargy, Rheumatisms, Wens, Ganglions, Kings-Evil, Ague, Surfeits and Consumptions are not frequent, and Barrenness, and Abortion very rare.

THE Diseases that prevail here are Fevers, Stitches, Cholick, Head-ach, Megrin, Jaundice, Sciatica, Stone, Small-Pox, Measles, Rickets, Scurvy, Worms, Fluxes, Tooth-ach, Cough and Squinance.

THE ordinary Remedies us'd by the Natives, are taken from Plants, Roots, Stones, Animals, &c.

TO cure a *Pleurisy*, the letting of Blood plentifully, is an ordinary Remedy.

WHEY, in which Violets have been boil'd, is us'd as a cooling and refreshing Drink for such as are ill of Fevers. When the Patient has not a Sweat duly, their Shirt is boil'd in Water,



## 176 A DESCRIPTION of the

Water, and afterwards put on them; which causes a speedy Sweat. When the Patient is very Costive, and without passage by Stool or Urine, or passes the ordinary time of sweating in *Fevers*, two or three handfuls of the Sea-plant call'd *Dulse*, boil'd in a little Water, and some fresh Butter with it, and the Infusion drunk, procures Passage both ways, and Sweat shortly after: The *Dulse*, growing on Stone, not that on the Seaware, is only proper in this case.

TO procure Sleep after a *Fever*, the Feet, Knees, and Ancles of the Patient are washed in warm Water, into which a good quantity of Chick-weed is put, and afterwards some of the Plant is applied warm to the Neck, and between the Shoulders, as the Patient goes to Bed.

THE tops of *Nettles*, chop'd small, and mix'd with a few whites of raw Eggs, applied to the Fore-head and Temples, by way of a Frontel, is us'd to procure Sleep.

FOXGLOVE, applied warm plaisterwise to the part affected, removes pains that follow after *Fevers*.

THE Sea-plant *Linarich*, is us'd to procure Sleep, as is mentioned among its Virtues.

ERICA-

## Western Islands of Scotland. 177

ERICA-BACCIFERA boil'd a little in Water, and apply'd warm to the Crown of the Head and Temples, is us'd likewise as a Remedy to procure Sleep.

TO remove *Stitches*, when letting Blood does not prevail, the part affected is rubb'd with an Ointment made of Camomile and fresh Butter, or of Brandy with fresh Butter; and others apply a Quantity of raw Scurvy-grass chop'd small.

THE *Scarlet-Fever*, which appear'd in this Isle only within these two Years last, is ordinarily cur'd by drinking now and then a Glass of Brandy. If an Infant happen to be taken with it, the Nurse drinks some Brandy, which qualifies the Milk, and proves a successful Remedy.

THE common *Alga*, or *Sea-Ware*, is yearly us'd with Success, to manure the Fruit-Trees in Sir *Donald Mack-Donald's* Orchard at *Armidill*: several affirm, that if a Quantity of Sea-Ware be us'd about the Roots of Fruit-Trees, whose Growth is hinder'd by the Sea-Air, this will make them grow and produce Fruit.

HEAD-ACH is remov'd by taking raw *Dulse* and *Linarich* apply'd cold by way of a  
M Plaister

## 178 A DESCRIPTION of the

Plaster to the Temples. This likewise is us'd as a Remedy to remove the *Megrims*.

THE *Jaundice* is cur'd by the Vulgar, as follows: the Patient being strip'd naked behind to the middle of the Back, he who acts the Surgeon's part, marks the 11th Bone from the Rump on the Back, with a black Stroke, in order to touch it with his Tongs, as mention'd already.

*SCIATICA* is cur'd by applying the Case with the Fat of the *Carara-fowl*, to the Thigh-bone; and it must not be remov'd from thence, till the Cure is perform'd.

*FLAMULA-JOVIS*, or *Spire-wort*, being cut small, and a Limpet-shell fill'd with it, and apply'd to the Thigh-bone, causes a Blister to rise about the Bigness of an Egg; which being cut, a Quantity of watry Matter issues from it: the Blister rises three times, and being empty'd as often, the Cure is perform'd. The Sea-plant *Linarich* is apply'd to the Place, to cure and dry the Wound.

*CROW-FOOT* of the *Moor*, is more effectual for raising a Blister, and curing the *Sciatica*, than *Flamula-Jovis*; for that sometimes fails of breaking, or raising the Skin, but the *Crow-foot* seldom fails.

SEVERAL

## Western Islands of Scotland. 179

SEVERAL of the common People have the Boldness to venture upon the *Flamula-Jovis*, instead of a Purge: they take a little of the Infusion, and drink it in melted fresh Butter, as the properest Vehicle; and this preserves the Throat from being excoriated.

FOR the Stone they drink Water-gruel without Salt: They likewise eat *Allium*, or wild *Garlick*, and drink the Infusion of it boil'd in Water, which they find effectual both ways. The Infusion of the Sea-plant *Dulse* boil'd, is also good against the Stone; as is likewise the Broth of *Wilks* and *Limpets*: and against the *Cholick*, *Costiveness*, and *Stitches*, a Quantity of *Scurvy-grass* boil'd in Water with some fresh Butter added and eaten for some days, is an effectual Remedy.

TO kill Worms, the Infusion of Tansy in Whey, or *Aquavita*, taken fasting, is an ordinary Medicine with the *Islanders*.

*CARYOPHYLLATA Alpina Chamedreos fol:* It grows on Marble in divers parts, about *Christ-Church* in *Strath*; never observ'd before in *Britain*, and but once in *Ireland*, by Mr. *Hiaton*. *Morison's Hist. Ray Synopsis*, 137.

*CARMEL*, alias *Knaphard*, by Mr. *James Sutherland* call'd *Argatilis Sylvaticus*: it has a  
M 2 blue

## 180 A DESCRIPTION of the

blue Flower in July; the Plant it self is not us'd, but the Root is eaten to expel Wind: and they say it prevents Drunkenness, by frequent chewing of it; and being so us'd, gives a good Relish to all Liquors, Milk only excepted. It is *Aromatick*, and the Natives prefer it to Spice, for brewing *Aquavita*; the Root will keep for many Years: some say that it is Cordial, and allays Hunger.

*SHUNNIS* is a Plant highly valu'd by the Natives, who eat it raw, and also boil'd with Fish, Flesh, and Milk: it is us'd as a Sovereign Remedy to cure the Sheep of the Cough; the Root eaten fasting, expels Wind: it was not known in *Britain*, except in the *North-west Isles*, and some parts of the opposite Continent. Mr. *James Sutherland* sent it to *France* some Years ago.

A Quantity of wild Sage chew'd between one's Teeth, and put into the Ears of Cows or Sheep that become blind, cures them, and perfectly restores their Sight; of which there are many fresh Instances both in *Skie* and *Harries*, by Persons of great Integrity.

A Quantity of wild Sage chop'd small, and eaten by Horses mix'd with their Corn, kills Worms; the Horse must not drink for 10 Hours after eating it.

THE

## Western Islands of Scotland. 181

THE Infusion of wild Sage after the same manner, produces the like effect.

WILD Sage cut small, and mix'd among Oats given to a Horse fasting, and kept without Drink for seven or eight Hours after, kills Worms.

FLUXES are cur'd by taking now and then a spoonful of the Syrup of blue Berries that grow on the *Mertillus*.

PLANTAIN boil'd in Water, and the *Hectic-stone* heated red-hot quench'd in the same, is successfully us'd for Fluxes.

SOME cure the Tooth-ach, by applying a little of the *Flamula-Jovis*, in a *Limpet-Shell*, to the Temples.

A Green Turf heated among Embers, as hot as can be endur'd, and by the Patient apply'd to the side of the Head affected, is likewise us'd for the Tooth-ach.

FOR Coughs and Colds, Water-gruel with a little Butter is the ordinary Cure.

FOR Coughs and Hoarsness, they use to bathe the Feet in warm Water, for the space of a quarter of an hour at least; and then rub a  
M 3 little

182 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

little Quantity of Deers Grease (the older the better) to the Soles of their Feet by the Fire; the Deers Grease alone is sufficient in the Morning: and this Method must be continu'd until the Cure is perform'd. And it may be us'd by Young or Old, except Women with Child, for the first four Months, and such as are troubled with Vapours.

*HARTSTONGUE* and *Maiden-Hair*, boil'd in Wort, and the Ale drunk, is us'd for *Coughs* and *Consumptions*.

*MILK* or Water, wherein the *Hectic-stone* hath been boil'd or quench'd red-hot, and being taken for ordinary Drink, is also efficacious against a *Consumption*.

*THE* Hands and Feet often wash'd in Water, in which the *Hectic-stone* has been boil'd, is esteem'd restorative.

*TARROW* with the *Hectic-stone* boil'd in Milk, and frequently drunk, is us'd for *Consumptions*.

*WATER-GRUEL* is also found by Experience to be good for *Consumptions*; it purifies the Blood, and procures Appetite, when drunk without Salt.

**THERE**

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 183

**THERE** is a Smith in the Parish of *Kilmartin*, who is reckon'd a Doctor for curing Faintness of the Spirits. This he performs in the following manner:

**THE** Patient being laid on the Anvil with his Face uppermost, the Smith takes a big Hammer in both his Hands, and making his Face all Grimace, he approaches his Patient; and then drawing his Hammer from the Ground, as if he design'd to hit him with his full Strength on the Forehead, he ends in a Feint, else he would be sure to cure the Patient of all Diseases: but the Smith being accustom'd to the Performance, has a Dexterity of managing his Hammer with Discretion; tho at the same time he must do it so as to strike Terror in the Patient: and this they say has always the design'd Effect.

**THE** Smith is famous for his Pedegree; for it has been observ'd of a long time, that there has been but one only Child born in the Family, and that always a Son, and when he arrived to Man's Estate, the Father died presently after: the present Smith makes up the thirteenth Generation of that Race of People who are bred to be Smiths, and all of them pretend to this Cure.

*ILICA PASSIO*, or *Twisting of the Guts*, has been several times cur'd by drinking a Draught of cold Water, with a little Oatmeal in it, and then hanging the Patient by the Heels for some time. The last Instance in *Skie* was by *John Morison*, in the Village of *Talisfer*, who by this Remedy alone cur'd a Boy of fourteen Years of Age. Dr. *Pitcairn* told me, that the like Cure had been perform'd in the Shire of *Fife* for the same Disease. A *Cataplasme* of hot *Dulse*, with its Juice, apply'd several times to the lower part of the Belly, cur'd the *Iliac Passion*.

THE Sea-plant *Dulse* is us'd, as is said above, to remove *Cholicks*; and to remove that Distemper and *Costiveness*, a little Quantity of fresh Butter, and some *Scurvy-grass* boil'd, and eaten with its Infusion, is an usual and effectual Remedy.

A Large handful of the Sea-plant *Dulse*, growing upon Stone, being apply'd outwardly, as is mention'd above, against the *Iliac Passio*, takes away the *After-birth* with great Ease and Safety; this Remedy is to be repeated until it produce the desir'd Effect, tho' some hours may be intermitted: the fresher the *Dulse* is, the Operation is the stronger; for if it is above two or three Days old, little is to be expected from

from it in this case. This Plant seldom or never fails of Success, tho' the Patient had been deliver'd several Days before; and of this I have lately seen an extraordinary Instance at *Edinburgh* in *Scotland*, when the Patient was given over as dead.

*DULSE*, being eaten raw or boil'd, is by daily Experience found to be an excellent *Anti-scorbutick*; it is better raw in this case, and must be first wash'd in cold Water.

FOR a *Fracture*, the first thing they apply to a broken Bone, is the White of an Egg, and some Barley Meal; and then they tie Splinters round it, and keep it so tied for some days. When the Splinters are untied, they make use of the following Ointment, *viz.* a like Quantity of *Betonica Pauli*, *St. John's Wort*, *Golden-Rod*, all cut and bruis'd in Sheeps Grease, or fresh Butter, to a Consistence; some of this they spread on a Cloth, and lay on the Wound, which continues untied for a few Days.

*GIBEN* of *St. Kilda*, i. e. the Fat of Sea-Fowls made into a Pudding in the Stomach of the Fowl, is also an approv'd Vulnerary for Man or Beast.

THE Vulgar make Purges of the Infusion of *Scurvy-grass*, and some fresh Butter; and



and this they continue to take for the space of a Week or two, because it is mild in its Operation.

THEY use the Infusion of the Sea-plant *Dulse* after the same manner, instead of a Purge.

EYES that are Blood-shot, or become blind for some days, are cur'd here by applying some blades of the Plant *Fern*, and the Yellow is by them reckon'd best; this they mix with the White of an Egg, and lay it on some coarse Flax—and the Egg next to the Face and Brows, and the Patient is order'd to lie on his Back.

TO ripen a *Tumor*, or *Boil*, they cut Female *Jacobea* small, mix it with some fresh Butter on a hot Stone, and apply it warm; and this ripens and draws the *Tumor* quickly, and without Pain: the same Remedy is us'd for Womens Breasts that are hard, or swell'd.

FOR taking the *Syroms* out of the Hands, they use Ashes of burnt *Sea-ware*, mix'd with Salt-water, and washing their Hands in it, without drying them, it kills the Worms.

BURNT Ashes of *Sea-ware* preserve Cheese, instead of Salt; which is frequently practis'd

in this Isle. Ashes of burnt *Sea-ware* scower Flaxen Thred better, and make it whiter than anything else.

WHEN their Feet are swell'd and benumb'd with Cold, they scarrify their Heels with a Lancet.

THEY make Glisters of the Plant *Mercury*, and some of the Vulgar use it as a Purge, for which it serves both ways.

THEY make Glisters also of the Roots of Flags, Water, and salt Butter.

THEY have found out a strange Remedy for such as could never ease Nature at Sea by Stool or Urine: There were three such Men in the Parish of *St. Mary's* in *Totterness*, two of them I knew, to wit, *John Mack-Phade*, and *Finlay Mack-Phade*; they liv'd on the Coast, and went often a Fishing, and after they had spent some nine or ten hours at Sea, their Bellies would swell: for after all their Endeavours to get passage either ways, it was impracticable until they came to Land, and then they found no difficulty in the thing. This was a great Inconvenience to any Boats-Crew in which either of these three Men had been fishing, for it oblig'd them often to forbear when the fishing was most plentiful, and to row to the shoar with any of these Men that happen'd to become

188 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

become sick; for landing was the only Remedy. At length one of their Companions thought of an Experiment to remove this Inconvenience; he consider'd, that when any of these Men had got their Feet on dry Ground, they could then ease Nature with as much freedom as any other Person; and therefore he carried a large green Turff of Earth to the Boat, and plac'd the green Side uppermost, without telling the reason. One of these Men who was subject to the Infirmary above-mention'd, perceiving an Earthen Turff in the Boat, was surpriz'd at the sight of it, and enquir'd for what purpose it was brought thither? He that laid it there answer'd, that he had done it to serve him, and that when he was dispos'd to ease Nature, he might find himself on Land, tho he was at Sea. The other took this as an Affront, so that from Words they came to Blows: their Fellows with much ado did separate them, and blam'd him that brought the Turff into the Boat, since such a Fancy could produce no other Effect than a Quarrel. All of them employ'd their time eagerly in fishing, until some hours after, that the angry Man, who before was so much affronted at the Turff, was so ill of the Swelling of his Belly as usual, that he begg'd of the Crew to row to the Shoar, but this was very disobliging to them all. He that intended to try the Experiment with the Turff, bid the Sick Man stand on it, and he might expect to have Success by it; but

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 189

but he refus'd, and still resent'd the Affront which he thought was intended upon him: but at last all the Boats Crew urg'd him to try what the Turff might produce, since it could not make him worse than he was. The Man being in great pain, was by their repeated Importunities prevail'd upon to stand with his Feet on the Turff; and it had the wish'd Effect, for Nature became obedient both ways: and then the angry Man changed his note, for he thanked his Doctor, whom he had some hours before beat. And from that time none of these three Men ever went to Sea without a green Turff in their Boat, which prov'd effectual. This is matter of Fact sufficiently known and attested by the better Part of the Parishioners still living upon the Place.

THE antient way the Islanders us'd to procure Sweat, was thus: A Part of an earthen Floor was cover'd with Fire, and when it was sufficiently heated, the Fire was taken away, and the Ground cover'd with a Heap of Straw; upon this Straw a Quantity of Water was poured, and the Patient lying on the Straw; the Heat of it put his whole Body into a sweat.

TO cause any particular Part of the Body to sweat, they dig an hole in an earthen Floor, and fill it with Hazle Sticks, and dry Rushes; above these they put a Hectick-Stone red hot, and pouring some Water into the Hole, the Patient

190 A DESCRIPTION of the  
tient holds the Part affected over it, and this  
procures a speedy Sweat.

THEIR common way of procuring Sweat  
is by drinking a large Draught of Water-gruel  
with some Butter, as they go to Bed.

Of the various Effects of Fishes on several  
Constitutions in these Islands.

DONGAL MACK-EWAN became  
feverish always after eating of Fish of  
any kind, except Thornback and Dog-Fish.

A LING-FISH having brown Spots on  
the Skin, causes such as eat of its Liver, to cast  
their Skin from head to foot. This happened to  
three Children in the Hamlet of Talisker, after  
eating the Liver of a brown spotted Ling.

FINLAY ROSS and his Family, in the  
Parish of Ugey, having eaten a fresh Ling-Fish,  
with brown Spots on its Skin, he and they be-  
came indisposed and feverish for some few Days,  
and in a little time after they were blister'd all  
over. They say that when the fresh Ling is sal-  
ted a few days, it has no such Effect.

THERE

Western Islands of Scotland. 191

THERE was a Horse in the Village Brefill,  
which had the Erektion backward, contrary to  
all other of its Kind.

A WEAVER in Portrie has a Faculty of  
erecting and letting fall his Ears at pleasure, and  
opens and shuts his Mouth on such occasions.

A BOY in the Castle of Duntulm, called  
Mister to a By-Name, hath a Pain and Swel-  
ling in his great Toe at every Change of the  
Moon, and it continues only for the Space of  
one Day, or two at most.

ALLEN MAC-LEOD being about ten  
Years of age, was taken ill of a Pain which  
moved from one Part of his Body to another,  
and where it was felt, the Skin appear'd blue; it  
came to his Toe, Thigh, Testicles, Arms and  
Head: when the Boy was bath'd in warm  
Water, he found most Ease. The hinder Part  
of his Head, which was last affected, had a lit-  
tle Swelling; and a Woman endeavouring to  
squeeze the Humour out of it, by bruising it  
on each Side with her Nails, she forc'd out at  
the same time a little Animal near an Inch in  
length, having a white Head sharp pointed,  
the rest of its Body of a red Colour, and full  
of small Feet on each side. Animals of this  
fort have been seen in the Head and Legs of  
several

192 *A DESCRIPTION of the  
several Persons in the Isles, and are distinguish'd  
by the Name of Fillan.*

*Yeast, how preserv'd by the Natives.*

**A** ROD of Oak, of four, five, six or eight  
Inches about, twisted round like a Wyth,  
boil'd in Wort, well dried and kept in a little  
Bundle of Barley-Straw, and being steep'd again  
in Wort, causeth it to ferment, and procures  
*Yeast*: the Rod is cut before the Middle of *May*,  
and is frequently us'd to furnish *Yeast*; and being  
preserved and us'd in this manner, it serves for  
many Years together. I have seen the Experi-  
ment try'd, and was shew'd a Piece of a thick  
Wyth, which hath been preserv'd for making  
Ale with, for about twenty or thirty years.

*The*

*Western Islands of Scotland. 193*

*The Effects of eating Hemlock-Root.*

**F**ERGUS KAIRD an Empirick, living  
in the Village *Talisker*, having by a mis-  
take eatena *Hemlock-Root*, instead of the white  
Wild Carrot; his Eyes did presently roll  
about, his Countenance became very pale, his  
Sight had almost fail'd him, the Frame of his  
Body was all in a strange Convulsion, and his  
*Pudenda* retir'd so inwardly, that there was no  
discerning whether he had then been Male or  
Female. All the Remedy given him in this  
State was a draught of hot Milk, and a little  
*Aqua-Vita* added to it; which he no sooner  
drank, but he vomited presently after, yet the  
Root still remain'd in his Stomach. They  
continu'd to administer the same Remedy for  
the space of four or five hours together, but  
in vain; and about an hour after they ceas'd to  
give him any thing, he voided the Root by  
Stool, and then was restor'd to his former  
state of health: he is still living, for any thing  
I know, and is of a strong healthful Consti-  
tution.

SOME few years ago, all the Flax in the  
Barony of *Troterness* was over-run with a  
great quantity of Green Worms, which in a  
few days would have destry'd it, had not a  
Flock of Ravens made a Tour round the  
N ground



194 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

ground where the Flax grew, for the space of fourteen Miles, and eat up the Worms in a very short time.

THE Inhabitants of this Isle are generally well proportion'd, and their Complexion is for the most part black. They are not oblig'd to Art in forming their Bodies, for Nature never fails to act her part bountifully to them; and perhaps there is no part of the habitable Globe where so few bodily Imperfections are to be seen, nor any Children that go more early. I have observ'd several of them walk alone before they were ten Months old: they are bath'd all over every Morning and Evening, some in cold, some in warm Water; but the latter is most commonly us'd, and they wear nothing strait about them. The Mother generally suckles the Child, failing of which, a Nurse is provided, for they seldom bring up any by hand: they give New-born Infants fresh Butter to take away the *Miconium*, and this they do for several days; they taste neither Sugar, nor Cinamon, nor have they any daily allowance of Sack bestowed on them, as the Custom is elsewhere, nor is the Nurse allowed to taste Ale.

THE Generality wear neither Shoes nor Stockings before they are seven, eight or ten years old; and many among them wear no Night-Caps before they are sixteen years old, and

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 195

and upwards; some use none all their life-time, and these are not so liable to Headaches, as others who keep their Heads warm.

THEY use nothing by way of prevention of Sicknes, observing it as a Rule to do little or nothing of that nature. The Abstemiousness of the Mothers is no small advantage to the Children: they are a very prolific People, so that many of their numerous Issue must seek their Fortune on the Continent, and not a few in Foreign Countries, for want of Employment at home. When they are any way fatigu'd by Travel, or otherways, they fail not to bathe their Feet in warm Water, wherein red Moss has been boil'd, and rub them with it going to Bed.

THE antient Custom of rubbing the Body by a warm hand opposite to the Fire, is now laid aside, except from the lower part of the Thigh, downwards to the Ankle; this they rub before and behind, in cold weather, and at going to Bed. Their simple Diet contributes much to their State of Health, and long Life; several among them of my Acquaintance arriv'd at the Age of Eighty, Ninety, and upwards; but the Lady *Mack-Leod* liv'd to the Age of one hundred and three years: she had then a comely head of Hair, and a case of good Teeth, and always enjoy'd the free use of her Understanding, until the Week in which she died.



## 196 A DESCRIPTION of the

THE Inhabitants of this and all the Western Isles, do wear their Shoes after Mr. Lock's mode, in his Book of Education; and among other great advantages by it, they reckon these two, That they are never troubled with the Gout, or Corns in their Feet.

THEY lie for the most part on Beds of Straw, and some on Beds of Heath; which latter being made after their way, with the tops uppermost, are almost as soft as a Feather-bed, and yield a pleasant scent after lying on 'em once. The Natives by experience have found it to be effectual for drying superfluous Humours, and strengthening the Nerves. It is very refreshing after a Fatigue of any kind. The *Picts* are said to have had an Art of Brewing curious Ale with the tops of Heath, but they refus'd to communicate it to the *Scots*, and so 'ts quite lost.

A NATIVE of this Isle requires treble the Dose of Physick that will serve one living in the South of *Scotland* for a Purge; yet an Islander is easier purged in the South, than at home. Those of the best Rank are easier wrought on by purging Medicines, than the Vulgar.

THE Inhabitants are of all People easiest cured of green Wounds; they are not so liable  
to

## Western Islands of Scotland. 197

to Fevers as others on such Occasions; and therefore they never cut off Arm, or Leg, tho never so ill broke, and take the freedom to venture on all kind of Meat and Drink, contrary to all Rule in such cases, and yet commonly recover of their Wounds.

MANY of the Natives, upon occasion of sickness, are disposed to try Experiments, in which they succeed so well, that I could not hear of the least Inconvenience attending their Practice. I shall only bring one Instance more of this, and that is of the illiterate Empirick *Neil Beaton* in *Skie*; who of late is so well known in the Isles and Continent, for his great success in curing several dangerous Distempers, tho he never appeared in the quality of a *Physician* until he arrived at the Age of Forty Years, and then also without the advantage of Education. He pretends to judg of the various qualities of Plants, and Roots, by their different Tastes; he has likewise a nice Observation of the Colours of their Flowers, from which he learns their astringent and loosening qualities: he extracts the Juice of Plants and Roots, after a Chymical way, peculiar to himself, and with little or no charge.

HE considers his Patients Constitution before any Medicine is administred to them; and he has form'd such a System for curing Diseases, as serves for a Rule to him upon all Occasions of this nature.

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HE treats *Riverius's Liliun Medicina*, and some other Practical Pieces that he has heard of, with Contempt; since in several Instances it appears that their Method of Curing has fail'd, where his had good Success.

SOME of the Diseases cured by him are as follows: Running Sores in Legs and Arms, grievous Head-aches; he had the boldness to cut a piece out of a Woman's Skull broader than half a Crown, and by this restored her to perfect Health. A Gentlewoman of my Acquaintance having contracted a dangerous Pain in her Belly, some days after her Deliverey of a Child, and several Medicines being us'd, she was thought past recovery, if she continued in that Condition a few hours longer; at last this Doctor happen'd to come there, and being employ'd, apply'd a Simple Plant to the part affected, and restored the Patient in a quarter of an hour after the Application.

ONE of his Patients told me that he sent him a Cap interlined with some Seeds, &c. to wear for the Cough, which it remov'd in a little time; and it had the like effect upon his Brother.

THE Success attending this Man's Cures was so extraordinary, that several People thought his Performances to have proceeded rather

rather from a Compact with the Devil, than from the Virtue of Simples. To obviate this, Mr. *Beaton* pretends to have had some Education from his Father, tho he died when he himself was but a Boy. I have discours'd him seriously at different times, and am fully satisfied, that he uses no unlawful means for obtaining his end.

HIS Discourse of the several Constitutions, the Qualities of Plants, &c. was more solid than could be expected from one of his Education. Several sick People from remote Isles came to him; and some from the Shire of *Ross*, at 70 Miles distance, sent for his Advice: I left him very successful, but can give no further Account of him since that time.

THEY are generally a very sagacious People, quick of Apprehension, and even the Vulgar exceed all those of their Rank, and Education, I ever yet saw in any other Country. They have a great Genius for Musick and Mechanicks. I have observed several of their Children, that, before they could speak, were capable to distinguish and make choice of one Tune before another upon the Violin; for they appear'd always uneasy until the Tune which they fancied best was play'd, and then they express'd their satisfaction by the motions of their Head and Hands.

THERE are several of 'em, who invent Tunes very taking in the *South of Scotland*, and elsewhere: some Musicians have endeavoured to pass for first Inventors of them by changing their Name, but this has been impracticable; for whatever Language gives the modern Name, the Tune still continues to speak its true Original: and of this I have been shew'd several Instances.

SOME of the Natives are very dextrous in engraving Trees, Birds, Deer, Dogs, &c. upon Bone, and Horn, or Wood, without any other Tool than a sharp-pointed Knife.

SEVERAL of both Sexes have a quick Vein of Poesy, and in their Language (which is very Emphatick) they compose Rhyme and Verse; both which powerfully affect the Fancy: And in my Judgment (which is not singular in this matter) with as great force as that of any antient or modern Poet I ever yet read. They have generally very retentive Memories, they see things at a great distance. The unhappiness of their Education, and their want of Converse with foreign Nations, deprives them of the opportunity to cultivate and beautify their Genius, which seems to have been form'd by Nature for great Attainments. And on the other hand, their Retiredness may be rather thought an advantage, at least to their better part: according

ing to that of the Historian; *Plus valait apud hos Ignorantia Vitiorum, quam apud Græcos omnia præcepta Philosophorum*: The Ignorance of Vices is more powerful among those, than all the Precepts of Philosophy are among the *Greeks*.

FOR they are to this day happily ignorant of many Vices that are practis'd in the Learned and Polite World: I could mention several, for which they have not as yet got a Name, or so much as a Notion of them.

THE Diet generally us'd by the Natives, consists of fresh Food, for they seldom taste any that is salted, except Butter; the generality eat but little Flesh, and only Persons of distinction eat it every day, and make three Meals, for all the rest eat only two, and they eat more Boil'd than Roasted. Their ordinary Diet is Butter, Cheese, Milk, Potatoes, Colworts, *Brochan* i. e. Oatmeal and Water boil'd; the latter taken with some Bread is the constant Food of several Thousands of both Sexes in this and other Isles, during the Winter and Spring: yet they undergo many Fatigues both by Sea and Land, and are very healthful. This verifies what the Poet saith, *Populis sat est Lymphaque Ceresque*: Nature is satisfied with Bread and Water.

THERE

THERE is no Place so well stored with such great quantity of good Beef and Mutton, where so little of both is consum'd by eating. They generally use no fine Sauces to entice a false Appetite, nor Brandy, or Tea for Digestion; the purest Water serves them in such Cases: this together with their ordinary Exercise, and the free Air, preserves their Bodies and Minds in a regular Frame, free from the various Convulsions that ordinarily attend Luxury. There is not one of them too Corpulent, nor too Meagre.

THE Men-Servants have always double the quantity of Bread, &c. that is given to Women-Servants, at which the latter are no ways offended, in regard of the many Fatigues by Sea and Land, which the former undergo.

OO N, which in *English* signifies Froth, is a Dish us'd by several of the *Islanders*, and some on the opposite Main-Land, in time of Scarcity, when they want Bread: it is made in the following manner; A quantity of Milk or Whey is boil'd in a Pot, and then it is wrought up to the mouth of the Pot with a long Stick of Wood, having a Cross at the lower-end; it is turn'd about like the Stick for making Chocolate: and being thus made, it is supp'd with Spoons. It is made up five or six times, in the same manner, and the last is always reckon'd best, and

and the first two or three frothings the worst: the Milk or Whey that is in the bottom of the Pot is reckon'd much better in all respects than simple Milk. It may be thought that such as feed after this rate, are not fit for Action of any kind; but I have seen several that liv'd upon this sort of Food, made of Whey only, for some Months together, and yet they were able to undergo the ordinary Fatigue of their Employments, whether by Sea or Land: and I have seen them travel to the tops of high Mountains, as briskly as any I ever saw.

SOME who live plentifully, make this Dish as above said of Goats Milk, which is said to be nourishing; the Milk is thickned, and tastes much better after so much working: some add a little Butter and Nutmeg to it. I was treated with this Dish in several Places, and being ask'd whether this said Dish or Chocolate was best, I told them that if we judged by the Effects, this Dish was preferable to Chocolate; for such as drink often of the former, enjoy a better state of Health, than those who use the latter.

*Graddan.*



*Graddan.*

THE antient way of dressing Corn, which is yet us'd in several Isles, is call'd *Graddan*, from the *Irish* word *Grad*; which signifies quick. A Woman sitting down, takes a handful of Corn, holding it by the Stalks in her left hand, and then sets fire to the Ears, which are presently in a flame: she has a Stick in her right hand, which she manages very dextrously, beating off the Grain at the very instant, when the Husk is quite burnt; for if she miss of that, she must use the Kiln, but Experience has taught them this Art to perfection. The Corn may be so dressed, winnowed, ground, and baked, within an Hour after reaping from the Ground. The Oat-bread dressed as above is loosening, and that dress'd in the Kiln astringent, and of greater strength for Labourers: But they love the *Graddan*, as being more agreeable to their Taste. This barbarous Custom is much laid aside, since the number of their Mills encreas'd. Captain *Fairweather*, Master of an *English* Vessel, having dropt Anchor at *Berner* of *Glenelg* over against *Skie*, saw two Women at this Imployment, and wondring to see so much Flame and Smoak, he came near, and finding that it was Corn they burnt, he run away in great haste, telling the Natives that he

he had seen two mad Women very busy burning Corn: the People came to see what the matter was, and laugh'd at the Captain's Mistake, tho he was not a little surpriz'd at the Strangeness of a Custom that he had never seen or heard of before.

THERE are two Fairs of late held yearly at *Portry* on the East-side of *Skie*: the Convenience of the Harbour, which is in the middle of the Isle, made 'em chuse this for the fittest Place. The first holds about the middle of *June*, the second about the beginning of *September*. The various Products of this and the adjacent Isles and Continent, are sold here: *viz.* Horses, Cows, Sheep, Goats, Hides, Skins, Butter, Cheese, Fish, Wool, &c.

ALL the Horses and Cows, sold at the Fair, swim to the main Land over one of the Ferries or Sounds call'd *Kyles*; one of which is on the East, the other on the South-side of *Skie*. That on the East is about a Mile broad, and the other on the South is half a Mile: They begin when it is near low Water, and fasten a twisted *Wyth* about the lower Jaw of each Cow, the other end of the *Wyth* is fasten'd to another Cow's Tail, and the Number so tied together is commonly five. A Boat with four Oars rows off, and a Man sitting in the Stern, holds the *Wyth* in his Hand to keep up the foremost Cow's Head; and thus all the five



## 206 A DESCRIPTION of the

five Cows swim as fast as the Boat rows: and in this manner above an hundred may be ferried over in one day. These Cows are sometimes drove above 400 Miles further South; they soon grow fat, and prove sweet and tender Beef.

*Their Habit.*

THE first Habit wore by Persons of Distinction in the Islands, was the *Leni-Croich*, from the *Irish* word *Leni*, which signifies a Shirt, and *Croich* Saffron, because their Shirt was dyed with that Herb: the ordinary number of Ells us'd to make this Robe, was twenty four; it was the upper Garb, reaching below the Knees, and was tied with a Belt round the middle: but the Islanders have laid it aside about a hundred Years ago.

THEY now generally use Coat, Waistcoat, and Breeches, as elsewhere; and on their Heads wear Bonnets made of thick Cloth, some blue, some black, and some grey.

MANY of the People wear *Trowis*: some have them very fine woven like Stockings of those made of Cloth; some are colour'd, and

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 207

and others striped: the latter are as well shap'd as the former, lying close to the Body from the middle downwards, and tied round with a Belt above the Haunches. There is a square Piece of Cloth which hangs down before. The Measure for shaping the *Trowis* is a Stick of Wood, whose Length is a Cubit, and that divided into the Length of a Finger, and half a Finger; so that it requires more Skill to make it, than the ordinary Habit.

THE Shoes antiently wore, were a piece of the Hide of a Deer, Cow, or Horse, with the Hair on, being tied behind and before with a Point of Leather. The generality now wear Shoes, having one thin Sole only, and shaped after the right and left Foot; so that what is for one Foot, will not serve the other.

BUT Persons of Distinction wear the Garb in fashion in the South of *Scotland*.

THE *Plad* wore only by the Men, is made of fine Wool, the Thred as fine as can be made of that kind; it consists of divers Colours, and there is a great deal of Ingenuity requir'd in sorting the Colours, so as to be agreeable to the nicest Fancy. For this reason the Women are at great pains, first to give an exact Pattern of the *Plad* upon a piece of Wood, having the number of every Thred of the

## 208 A DESCRIPTION of the

the Stripe on it. The Length of it is commonly seven double Ells; the one end hangs by the Middle over the left Arm, the other going round the Body, hangs by the end over the left Arm also: the right Hand above it is to be at liberty to do any thing upon occasion. Every Isle differs from each other in their Fancy of making *Plads*, as to the Stripes in Breadth, and Colours. This Humour is as different thro the main Land of the *Highlands*, in-so-far that they who have seen those Places, are able, at the first View of a Man's *Plad*, to guess the Place of his Residence.

WHEN they travel on foot, the *Plad* is tied on the Breast with a Bodkin of Bone or Wood (just as the *Spina* wore by the *Germans*, according to the Description of *C. Tacitus*;) the *Plad* is tied round the middle with a Leather Belt; it is pleated from the Belt to the Knee very nicely: this Dress for Footmen is found much easier and lighter than *Breeches*, or *Trowis*.

THE antient Dress wore by the Women, and which is yet wore by some of the Vulgar, called *Arisad*, is a white *Plad*, having a few small Stripes of black, blue, and red; it reach'd from the Neck to the Heels, and was tied before on the Breast with a Buckle of Silver, or Brass, according to the Quality of the Person. I have seen some of the former  
of

## Western Islands of Scotland. 209

of an hundred Marks value; it was broad as any ordinary Pewter Plate, the whole curiously engraven with various Animals, &c. There was a lesser Buckle, which was wore in the middle of the larger, and above two Ounces weight; it had in the Center a large piece of Chrystal, or some finer Stone, and this was set all round with several finer Stones of a lesser size.

THE *Plad* being pleated all round, was tied with a Belt below the Breast; the Belt was of Leather, and several Pieces of Silver intermix'd with the Leather like a Chain. The lower end of the Belt has a Piece of Plate about eight Inches long, and three in breadth, curiously engraven; the end of which was adorned with fine Stones, or Pieces of Red Coral. They wore Sleeves of Scarlet Cloth, clos'd at the end as Mens Vests, with Gold Lace round 'em, having Plate Buttons set with fine Stones. The Head-dress was a fine *Kerchief* of Linen strait about the Head, hanging down the Back taper-wise; a large Lock of Hair hangs down their Cheeks above their Breast, the lower end tied with a Knot of Ribbands.

THE Islanders have a great respect for their Chiefs and Heads of Tribes, and they conclude Grace after every Meal, with a Petition to God for their Welfare and Prosperity. Neither  
O ther

ther will they, as far as in them lies, suffer them to sink under any Misfortune; but in case of a Decay of Estate, make a voluntary Contribution on their behalf, as a common Duty, to support the Credit of their Families.

*Way fo Fighting.*

**T**HE antient way of Fighting was by set Battles; and for Arms some had broad two-handed Swords and Head-pieces, and others Bows and Arrows. When all their Arrows were spent, they attack'd one another with Sword in hand. Since the Invention of Guns, they are very early accustomed to use them, and carry their Pieces with them wherever they go: They likewise learn to handle the broad Sword and Target. The *Chief* of each Tribe advances with his Followers within shot of the Enemy, having first laid aside their upper Garments; and after one general Discharge, they attack them with Sword in hand, having their Target on their left Hand (as they did at *Kelicranky*) which soon brings the Matter to an Issue, and verifies the Observation made of 'em your Historians:

*Mors cito, aut Victoria leta.*

THIS

**T**HIS Isle is divided into three Parts, which are possessed by different Proprietors. The Southern part call'd *Slait*, is the Property and Title of Sir *Donald Mack-Donald*, Knight and Baronet: his Family is always distinguish'd from all the Tribes of his Name, by the *Irish* as well as *English*, and call'd *Mack-Donald* absolutely, and by way of Excellence; he being reckon'd by *Genealogists*, and all others, the first for Antiquity among all the Antient Tribes, both in the Isles and Continent. He is lineally descended from *Sommerled*, who, according to *Buchanan*, was *Thane of Argyle*. He got the Isles into his Possession by virtue of his Wife's Right; his Son was call'd *Donald*, and from him all the Families of the Name *Mack-Donald* are descended. He was the first of that Name, who had the Title of King of the Isles. One of that Name subscribing a Charter granted by the King of *Scots* to the Family of *Roxburgh*, writes as follows: *Donald, King of the Isles, Witness.* He would not pay homage to the King for the Isles, but only for the Lands which he held of him on the Continent.

**O**NE of *Donald's* Successors married a Daughter of King *Robert* the Second, the first of the Name of *Stuart*, by whom he acquired several Lands in the Highlands. The Earldom of *Ross* came to this Family, by marrying the

212 *A DESCRIPTION of the*  
 the Heiress of the House of *Lefly*. One of  
 the Earls of *Rofs*, called *John*, being of an  
 easy Temper, and too liberal to the Church,  
 and to his Vassals and Friends, his Son *Æ-*  
*neas* (by *Buchanan* called *Donald*) was so  
 opposite to his Father's Conduct, that he ga-  
 ther'd together an Army to oblige him from  
 giving away any more of his Estate. The  
 Father rais'd an Army against his Son, and  
 fought him at Sea, on the Coast of *Mull*; the  
 Place is since called the *Bloody-Bay*: the Son  
 however had the Victory. This disposed the  
 Father to go straight to the King, and make  
 over the Right of all his Estate to him.  
 The Son kept possession some time after;  
 however, this occasion'd the Fall of that great  
 Family, tho there are yet extant several an-  
 tient Tribes of the Name, both in the Isles  
 and Continent. Thus far the Genealogist  
*Mack-Urich*, and *Hugh Mack-Donald*, in their  
*Manuscripts*.

THE next adjacent Part to *Slait*, and join-  
 ing it on the North-side, is *Strath*; it is the  
 Property of the Laird of *Mack-Kinnon*, Head of  
 an antient Tribe.

ON the North-West side of *Strath* lies  
 that part of *Skie* called *Mackleod's Country*,  
 possessed by *Mackleod*. Genealogists say he  
 is lineally descended from *Leod*, Son to the  
 black

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 213  
 black *Prince of Man*; he is Head of an antient  
 Tribe.

THE Barony of *Troterness* on the North  
 side *Skie*, belongs to Sir *Donald Mack-Donald*;  
 the Proprietors and all the Inhabitants are Pro-  
 testants, except twelve, who are Roman Catho-  
 licks. The former observe the Festivals of  
*Christmas*, *Easter*, *Good-Friday*, and that of *St.*  
*Michael's*. Upon the latter they have a Caval-  
 cade in each Parish, and several Families bake  
 the Cake call'd *St. Michael's Bannock*.

## B O O T.

THE Isle of *Boot*, being ten Miles in length, lies on the West-side of *Cowal*, from which it is separated by a narrow Channel, in several parts not a Mile broad. The North-end of this Isle is mountainous and heathy, being more design'd for Pasturage than Cultivation: the Mould is brown, or black, and in some parts clayey; the Ground yields a good Produce of Oats, Barley, and Pease: There is but little Wood growing there, yet there is a Coppice at the side of *Loch-fad*. The Ground is arable from the middle to the Southward, the *Hectic-stone* is to be had in many parts of this Isle; and there is a Quarry of red Stone near the Town of *Rosa*, by which the Fort there, and the Chappel on its North-side, have been built. *Rothsay*, the head Town of the Shire of *Boot* and *Arran*, lies on the East Coast of *Boot*, and is one of the Titles of the Prince of *Scotland*: King *Robert* the Third created his Son Duke of *Rothsay*, and Steward of *Scotland*; and afterwards Queen *Mary* created the Lord *Darnley* Duke of *Rothsay*, before her Marriage with him. This Town is a very Antient Royal Borough, but thinly peopled, there not being above a hundred Families in it, and they have no foreign Trade. On the North-side of *Rothsay* there is a very antient ruinous Fort, round in Form,

Form, having a thick Wall, and about three Stories high, and Passages round within the Wall; it is surrounded with a wet Ditch; it has a Gate on the South, and a double Gate on the East, and a Bastion on each side the Gate, and without these there's a Draw-Bridg, and the Sea flows within 40 Yards of it. The Fort is large enough for exercising a Battalion of Men; it has a Chappel and several little Houses within, and a large House of four Stories high, fronting the Eastern Gate. The People here have a Tradition, that this Fort was built by King *Rosa*, who is said to have come to this Isle before King *Fergus* the First. The other Forts are *Down-Owle* and *Down-Allin*, both on the West-side.

THE Churches here are as follow, *Kilmichel*, *Kil-Blain*, and *Kil-Chattan*, in the South Parish; and *Lady-Kirk* in *Rothsay* is the most Northerly Parish: all the Inhabitants are Protestants.

THE Natives here are not troubled with any Epidemical Disease: the *Small-pox* visits them commonly once every sixth, or seventh Year. The oldest Man now living in this Isle, is one *Fleming* a Weaver in *Rothsay*; his Neighbours told me that he could never ease Nature at Sea, who is 90 Years of Age. The Inhabitants generally speak the *English* and *Irish* Tongue, and wear the same Habit with those of the other Islands; they are very industrious



## 216 A DESCRIPTION of the

Fishers, especially for Herring, for which use they are furnished with about 80 large Boats: the Tenants pay their Rent with the Profit of Herrings, if they are to be had any where on the Western Coast.

THE Principal Heretors here are *Stuart* of *Boot*, who is Hereditary Sheriff of this Shire; and hath his Seat in *Rosa: Ballantine* of *Keams*, whose Seat is at the Head of the Bay of that Name, and has an Orchard by it: *Stuart* of *Estick*, whose Seat has a Park and Orchard. And about a Mile to the South of *Rothsay*, next lies two Isles call'd *Cumbray* the greater, and the lesser; the former is within a League of *Boot*. This Island has a Chappel and a Well, which the Natives esteem a *Catholicon* for all Diseases. This Isle is a Mile in length, but the other Isle is much less in Compass. Both Isles are the Property of *Montgomery* of *Skelmorly*.

A R R A N.

## Western Islands of Scotland. 217

A R R A N.

THE Name of this Isle is by some derived from *Arran*, which in the *Irish* Language signifies Bread: Others think it comes more probably from *Arin*, or *Arfyn*, which in their Language is as much as the Place of the Giant *Fin-Mac-Coul's* Slaughter or Execution; for *Aar* signifies Slaughter, and so they will have *Arin* only the Contraction of *Arrin* or *Fin*. The received Tradition of the great Giant *Fin-Mac-Coul's* military Valour, which he exercised upon the antient Natives here, seems to favour this Conjecture; this they say is evident from the many Stones set up in divers Places of the Isle, as Monuments upon the Graves of Persons of Note that were kill'd in Battel. This Isle is twenty four Miles from *South* to *North*, and seven Miles from *East* to *West*. It lies between the Isle of *Boot*, and *Kynntyre*, in the opposite Main land. The Isle is high and mountainous, but slopes on each side round the Coast, and the *Glen* is only made use of for Tillage. The Mountains near *Brodick-Bay* are of a considerable height; all the Hills generally afford a good Pasturage, tho a great part of 'em be covered only with Heath.

THE Mould here is of divers Colours, being black and brown near the Hills, and clayey and sandy upon the Coast.

THE

THE Natives told me that some Places of the Isle afford Fullers-Earth. The Coast on the *East* side is rocky near the Shore; the Stones on the Coast, for some Miles beneath *Brodick*, are all of a red Colour, and of these the Castle of *Brodick* is built. The Natives say that the Mountains near the Castle of *Brodick* afford Chrystal, and that the Dutches of *Hamilton* put so great a Value on it, as to be at the Charge of cutting a Necklace of it; which the Inhabitants take as a great Honour done them, because they have a great Veneration for her Grace. There is no considerable Woods here, but a few Coppices, yet that in the *Glen* towards the *West* is above a Mile in length. There are capacious Fields of Arable Ground on each side *Brodick-Bay*, as also on the opposite Western Coast. The largest and best Field for Pasturage is that on the *South-west* side.

SEVERAL Rivers on each side this Isle afford *Salmon*, particularly the two Rivers on the *West* called *Mackir* side, and the two in *Kirkmichel* and *Brodick-Bay*.

THE Air here is temperately cold, and moist, which is in some measure qualified by the fresh Breezes that blow from the Hills, but the Natives think a Dram of Strong-waters is a good Corrective.

THERE

THERE are several Caves on the Coast of this Isle: those on the *West* are pretty large, particularly that in *Drum-cruay*, a hundred Men may sit or lie in it; it is contracted gradually from the Floor upwards to the Roof. In the upper-end there is a large piece of Rock form'd like a Pillar; there's engraven on it a Deer, and underneath it a two-handed Sword; there is a void space on each side this Pillar.

THE *South-side* of the Cave has a Horse-shoe engraven on it. On each side the Door, there's a hole cut out, and that they say was for holding big Trees, on which the Caldrons hang for boiling their Beef and Venison. The Natives say that this was the Cave in which *Fin-Mac-Coul* lodged during the time of his residence in this Isle, and that his Guards lay in the lesser Caves, which are near this big one: there is a little Cave joining to the largest, and this they call the Cellar.

THERE is a Cave some Miles more *South-erly* on the same Coast, and they told me that the Minister preached in it sometimes, in regard of its being more central than the Parish-Church

SEVERAL erected Stones are to be seen on each side this Isle: four of these are near *Brodick-Bay*, about the distance of 70 Yards from

## 220 A DESCRIPTION of the

from the River, and are seven foot high each. The highest of these Stones that fell under my observation was on the *South-side* of *Kirkmichel* River, and is above fifteen Foot high; there is a Stone Coffin near it, which has been fill'd with human Bones, until of late that the River washed away the Earth, and the Bones that were in the Coffin: *Mac-Louis*, who had seen them, says they were of no larger size than those of our own time. On the *West-side* there are three Stones erected in *Baelliminich*, and a fourth at some distance from these, about six Foot high each. In the *Moor* on the *East-side* *Druim-cruay*, there is a Circle of Stones, the Area is about thirty Paces; there is a Stone of the same shape and kind about forty Paces to the *West* of the Circle: the Natives say that this Circle was made by the Giant *Fin-Mac-Coul*, and that to the single Stone, *Bran*, *Fin-Mac-Coul's* Hunting-dog, was usually tied. About half a Mile to the *North-side* *Baelliminich* there are two Stones erected, each of them eight Foot high.

THERE is a Circle of big Stones a little to the *South* of *Druim-cruay*, the Area of which is about twelve Paces; there is a broad thin Stone in the middle of this Circle, supported by three lesser Stones: the antient Inhabitants are reported to have burnt their Sacrifices on the broad Stone, in time of Heathenism.

THERE

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 221

THERE is a thin broad Stone tapering towards the top, erected within a quarter of a Mile of the Sea, near *Machir* River, and is nine Foot high, and at some little distance from the River, there is a large Cavern of Stones.

THERE is an Eminence of about a thousand Paces in Compass on the Sea-Coast in *Druim-cruay* Village, and it is fenced about with a Stone-Wall: of old it was a Sanctuary, and whatever number of Men or Cattle could get within it, were secured from the assaults of their Enemies, the Place being privileged by Universal Consent.

THE only good Harbour in this Isle is *Lamlash*, which is in the *South-east* end of the Isle of that Name.

THERE is a great fishing of *Cod*, and *Whiting*, in and about this Bay.

THE whole Isle is design'd by Nature more for Pasturage, than Cultivation; the Hills are generally covered all over with Heath, and produce a mixture of the *Erica-Baccifera*, *Cats-tail*, and *Juniper*, all which are very agreeable to the Eye in the Summer. The highest Hills of this Island are seen at a considerable distance from several parts of the Continent and *North-west* Isles, and they serve instead of a Forest to maintain

222 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

maintain the Deer, which are about four hundred in number, and they are carefully kept by a Forester, to give sport to the Duke of *Hamilton*, or any of his Family that go a Hunting there. For if any of the Natives happen to kill a Deer without Licence, which is not often granted, he is liable to a Fine of 20 *l. Scots* for each Deer. And when they grow too numerous, the Forester grants Licences for killing a certain number of them, on condition they bring the Skins to himself.

THE Cattle here are Horses and Cows of a middle size, and they have also Sheep and Goats. This Isle affords the common Sea and Land-Fowls that are to be had in the *Western Isles*. The black Cock is not allow'd to be killed here without a Licence; the Transgressors are liable to a Fine.

THE Castle of *Brodick*, on the *North-side* of the Bay of that Name, stands on a Plain, from which there is about 400 Paces of a gradual descent towards the Sea.

THIS Castle is built in a long Form; from *South* to *North* there is a Wall of two Stories high, that encompasses the Castle and Tower: the space within the Wall on the *South-side* the Castle, is capable of mustering a Battalion of Men.

THE

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 223

THE Castle is four Stories high, and has a Tower of great height joined to the *North-side*, and that has a Bastion close to it, to which a lower Bastion is added. The *South* and *West* sides are surrounded with a broad wet Ditch, but the *East* and *North* sides have a descent which will not admit of a wet Ditch. The Gate looks to the *East*. This Castle is the Duke of *Hamilton's* Seat, when his Grace or any of the Family make their Summer Visit to this Island. The Bayliff or Steward has his Residence in this Castle, and he has a Deputation to act with full power to levy the Rents, give Leases of the Lands, and hold Courts of Justice.

THERE is another Castle belonging to the Duke in the *North-side* of the Isle, at the head of *Loch-Kenistil*, in which there is a Harbour for Barks and Boats. The Isle of *Arran* is the Duke of *Hamilton's* Property (a very small part excepted) it lies in the Sheriffdom of *Boat*, and made part of the Diocess of *Argyle*.

THE Inhabitants of this Island are composed of several Tribes. The most antient Family among them, is by the Natives reckon'd to be *Mack-Louis*, which in the antient Language signifies the Son of *Lewis*: they own themselves to be descended of *French* Parentage, their Sirname in *English* is *Fullerton*, and their Title



Title *Kirk-Michell*, the Place of their Residence. If Tradition be true, this little Family is said to be of 700 years standing. The present Possessor oblig'd me with the sight of his old and new Charters, by which he is one of the King's Coroners within this Island, and as such, he hath a Halbert peculiar to his Office; he has his right of late from the Family of *Hamilton*, wherein his Title and Perquisites of Coroner are confirm'd to him and his Heirs. He is oblig'd to have three Men to attend him upon all publick Emergencies, and he is bound by his Office to pursue all Malefactors, and to deliver them to the Steward, or in his absence to the next Judg. And if any of the Inhabitants refuse to pay their Rents at the usual term, the Coroner is bound to take him personally, or to seize his Goods. And if it should happen that the Coroner with his Retinue of three Men is not sufficient to put his Office in Execution, then he summons all the Inhabitants to concur with him; and immediately they rendezvous to the place, where he fixes his Coroner's Staff. The Perquisites due to the Coroner are a Firlet or Bushel of Oats, and a Lamb from every Village in the Isle; both which are punctually paid him at the ordinary Terms.

THE Inhabitants of this Isle are well proportion'd, generally brown, and some of a black Complexion; they enjoy a good state of Health, and have a Genius for all Callings or Employ-

Employments, tho they have but few Mechanics: they wear the same Habit with those of the nearest Isles, and are very Civil; they all speak the *Irish* Language, yet the *English* Tongue prevails on the *East-side*, and ordinarily the Ministers preach in it, and in *Irish* on the *West-side*. Their ordinary Asseveration is by *Nale*, for I did not hear any Oath in the Island.

The Churches in this Isle are,

**K**ILBRIDE in the *South-East*, *Kilmore* in the *South*, *Cabel-Vual* a Chappel, *Kilmichel* in the Village of that name, *St. James's* Church at the *North* end.

THE Natives are all Protestants, they observe the Festivals of *Christmas*, *Good-Friday*, and *Easter*. I had like to have forgot a valuable Curiosity in this Isle, which they call *Baul-Mulay*, i. e. *Molingus* his Stone Globe: this Saint was Chaplain to *Mack-Donald* of the Isles; his Name is celebrated here on the account of this Globe, so much esteem'd by the Inhabitants. This Stone for its intrinsick value has been carefully transmitted to Posterity for several Ages. It is a green Stone much like a Globe in Figure, about the bigness of a Goose-Egg.

P

THE



THE Vertue of it is to remove Stitches from the sides of sick Persons, by laying it close to the Place affected; and if the Patient does not out-live the Distemper, they say the Stone removes out of the Bed of its own accord, and *è contra*. The Natives use this Stone for swearing decisive Oaths upon it.

THEY ascribe another extraordinary Vertue to it, and 'tis this: The credulous Vulgar firmly believe that if this Stone is cast among the Front of an Enemy, they will all run away; and that as often as the Enemy rallies, if this Stone is cast among them, they still lose Courage, and retire. They say that *Mack-Donald* of the Isles carried this Stone about him, and that Victory was always on his side when he threw it among the Enemy. The Custody of this Globe is the peculiar Privilege of a little Family called *Clan-Chattons*, alias *Mack-Intosh*; they were antient Followers of *Mack-Donald* of the Isles. This Stone is now in the Custody of *Margaret Miller*, alias *Mack-Intosh*: she lives in *Baellmianich*, and preserves the Globe with abundance of care; it is wrapped up in fair Linen Cloth, and about that there is a piece of Woollen Cloth, and she keeps it still lock'd up in her Chest, when it is not given out to exert its qualities.

ISLESAY,

## I S L E S A Y,

IS a big Rock, about six Leagues to the *South-West* of *Arran*; it rises in form of a Sugar-Loaf, but the top is plain, and large enough for drawing up a thousand Men in Ranks: there is a Fresh-Water Lake in the middle of the Plain, the whole Isle is covered with long Grass, and is inaccessible, except on the *South-West side*, by a stair cut out in the Rock; in the middle of it there is a small Tower of three Stories high with the top. There is a Fresh-Water Spring issuing out of the side of this great Rock; below the Entry there is a place where the Fishers take up their Residence during their stay about this Rock in quest of *Cod* and *Ling*; and there is a good Anchorage for their Vessels, very near their Tents.

THIS Rock in the Summer-time abounds with variety of Sea-Fowl, that build and hatch in it. The *Solan Geese* and *Culterneb* are most numerous here; the latter are by the Fishers called *Albanich*, which in the antient *Irish* Language signifies *Scots-Men*.

THE Isle hath a Chappel on the top called *Fiunnay*, and an antient Pavement, or Causeway.

P 2

ISLESAY

*ISLESAY* is the Earl of *Cassil's* Property, the Tenant who farms it pays him one hundred Marks *Scots* yearly; the Product of the Isle is Hogs, Fowl, Down, and Fish. The Isle *Avon*, above a Mile in Circumference, lies to the South of *Kintyre Mule*; it hath a Harbour for Barks on the North.

The Isle *GIGAY*.

THE Isle *Gigay* lies about a League from *Lergie* on the West-side of *Kintyre*; it is four Miles in length, and one in breadth, was formerly in the Diocess, and is still part of the Sheriffdom of *Argyle*. This Isle is for the most part arable, but rocky in other parts: the Mold is brown and clayey, inclining to red; it is good for Pasturage and Cultivation. The Corn growing here is Oats and Barley. The Cattel bred here are Cows, Horses, and Sheep. There is a Church in this Island called *Kil-chattan*, it has an Altar in the East-end, and upon it a Font of Stone which is very large, and hath a small hole in the middle which goes quite through it. There are several Tomb-stones in and about this Church; the Family of the *Mack-Neils*, the principal Possessors of this Isle, are buried under the Tomb-stones on the East-side the Church, where there is a Plat of ground set apart for them. Most of all

all the Tombs have a two-handed Sword engraven on them, and there is one that has the Representation of a Man upon it.

NEAR the West-side the Church there is a Stone of about 16 Foot high, and 4 broad, erected upon the Eminence. About 60 yards distance from the Chappel there is a square Stone erected about ten Foot high; at this the antient Inhabitants bowed, because it was there where they had the first View of the Church.

THERE is a Cross 4 foot high at a little distance, and a Cavern of Stone on each side of it.

THIS Isle affords no Wood of any kind, but a few Bushes of Juniper on the little Hills. The Stones, upon which the Scurf *Corkir* grows, which dyes a Crimson Colour, are found here; as also those that produce the *Crottil*, which dyes a Philamot Colour. Some of the Natives told me that they us'd to chew Nettles, and hold them to their Nostrils to stanch bleeding at the Nose; and that Nettles being apply'd to the Place, would also stop bleeding at a Vein, or otherwise.

THERE is a Well in the North End of this Isle called *Toubir more*, i. e. a great Well, because of its Effects, for which it is famous

230 *A DESCRIPTION of the*  
 among the Islanders; who together with the  
 Inhabitants use it as a *Catholicon* for Diseases.  
 It's cover'd with Stone and Clay, because the  
 Natives fancy that the Stream that flows from  
 it might overflow the Isle; and it is always  
 opened by a *Diroch*, *i. e.* an Inmate, else they  
 think it would not exert its Virtues. They  
 ascribe one very extraordinary Effect to it, and  
 'tis this; That when any Foreign Boats are  
 Wind-bound here (which often happens) the  
 Master of the Boat ordinarily gives the Native  
 that lets the Water run, a Piece of Money; and  
 they say, that immediately afterwards the Wind  
 changes in favour of those that that are thus de-  
 tain'd by contrary Winds. Every Stranger that  
 goes to drink of the Water of this Well, is ac-  
 customed to leave on its Stone-Cover a Piece of  
 Money, a Needle, Pin, or one of the prettiest  
 variegated Stones they can find.

THE Inhabitants are all Protestants, and  
 speak the *Irish* Tongue generally, there being  
 but few that speak *English*: they are grave and  
 reserv'd in their Conversation; they are accus-  
 tomed not to bury on *Friday*; they are fair or  
 brown in Complection, and use the same Ha-  
 bit, Diet, &c. that is made use of in the adja-  
 cent Continent and Isles. There is only one  
 Inn in this Isle.

THE Isle *Caray* lies a Quarter of a Mile  
 South from *Gigay*; it is about a Mile in compass,  
 affords

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 231

affords good Pasturage, and abounds with Co-  
 neys. There is a Harbour for Barks on the  
 North-east End of it. This Island is the Pro-  
 perty of *Mack-Alester* of *Lergy*, a Family of  
 the *Mackdonalds*.

*JURAH.*

THE Isle of *Jurah* is, by a narrow Chan-  
 nel of about half a Mile broad, separa-  
 ted from *Ila*. The Natives say that *Jurah* is  
 so call'd from *Dib* and *Rah*, two Brethren, who  
 are believ'd to have been *Danes*; the Names  
*Dib* and *Rah* signifying as much as without  
 Grace or Prosperity. Tradition says, that these  
 two Brethren fought and kill'd one another in  
 the Village *Knock-Cronm*, where there are two  
 Stones erected of 7 Foot high each, and under  
 them, they say, there are Urns with the Ashes  
 of the two Brothers; the Distance between them  
 is about sixty Yards. The Isle is mountainous  
 along the middle, where there are four Hills  
 of a considerable height; the two highest  
 are well known to Sea-faring Men, by the  
 Name of the *Paps of Jurah*: they are very con-  
 spicuous from all Quarters of Sea and Land in  
 those Parts.

## 232 A DESCRIPTION of the

THIS Isle is twenty four Miles long, and in some Places six or seven Miles in Breadth; it is the Duke of *Argyle's* Property, and Part of the Sheriffdom of *Argyle*.

THE Mold is brown and greyish on the Coast, and black in the Hills, which are cover'd with Heath, and some Grass, that proves good Pasturage for their Cattel, which are Horses, Cows, Sheep, and Goats. There's Variety of Land and Water-Fowl here. The Hills ordinarily have about three hundred Deer grazing on them, which are not to be hunted by any, without the Steward's Licence. This Isle is perhaps the wholesomest Plat of Ground either in the Isles or Continent of *Scotland*, as appears by the long Life of the Natives, and their State of Health; to which the Height of the Hills is believ'd to contribute in a large measure, by the fresh Breezes of Wind that come from 'em to purify the Air: whereas, *Ilay* and *Gigay* on each side this Isle, are much lower, and are not so wholesom by far, being liable to several Diseases that are not here. The Inhabitants observe, that the Air of this Place is perfectly pure, from the middle of *March* till the End or Middle of *September*: There is no Epidemical Disease that prevails here: Fevers are but seldom observ'd by the Natives, and any kind of Flux is rare; the Gout and Agues are not so much as known by them,

## Western Islands of Scotland. 233

them, neither are they liable to Sciatica. Convulsions, Vapours, Palsies, Surfeits, Lethargies, Megrims, Consumptions, Rickets, Pains of the Stomach, or Coughs, are not frequent here, and none of them are at any time observ'd to become mad. I was told by several of the Natives, that there was not one Woman died of Child-bearing there these 34 Years past. Blood-letting and Purging are not us'd here.

IF any contract a Cough, they use *Brochan* only to remove it. If after a Fever one chance to be taken ill of a Stitch, they take a Quantity of *Lady-wrack*, and half as much of *Red-Fog*, and boil them in Water; the Patients sit upon the Vessel, and receive the Fume, which by experience they find effectual against this Distemper. Fevers and the *Diarrhea's* are found here only when the Air is foggy and warm, in Winter or Summer.

THE Inhabitants for their Diet make use of Beef and Mutton in the Winter and Spring; as also of Fish, Butter, Cheese, and Milk. The Vulgar take *Brochan* frequently for their Diet during the Winter and Spring; and *Brochan* and Bread us'd for the space of two Days, restores lost Appetite.

THE Women of all Ranks eat a lesser Quantity of Food than the Men: this and their  
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not wearing any thing frait about them, is believ'd to contribute much to the Health both of the Mothers and Children.

THERE are several Fountains of excellent Water in this Isle: the most celebrated of them is that of the Mountain *Beinbrek* in the *Tarbat*, called *Toubir ni Lechkin*, that is, the Well in a stony Descent; it runs Easterly, and they commonly reckon it to be lighter by one half than any other Water in this Isle: for tho one drink a great Quantity of it at a time, the Belly is not swell'd, or any ways burden'd by it. Natives and Strangers find it efficacious against Nauseousness of the Stomach, and the Stone. The River *Nissa* receives all the Water that issues from this Well, and this is the reason they give why Salmons here are in Goodness and Taste far above those of any other River whatever. The River of *Crokbreck* affords Salmon also, but they are not esteem'd so good as those of the River *Nissa*.

SEVERAL of the Natives have liv'd to a great Age: I was told that one of them, called *Gillouir Mack-Crain*, liv'd to have kept one hundred and eighty *Christmasses* in his own House; he died about fifty Years ago, and there are several of his Acquaintance living to this day, from whom I had this Account.

BAILIFF

BAILIFF *Campbell* lived to the Age of one hundred and six Years, he died three Years ago, he passed the thirty three last Years before his Death in this Isle. *Donald Mac N' Mill*, who lives in the Village of *Killearn* at present, is arriv'd at the Age of ninety Years.

A WOMAN of the Isle of *Scorba*, near the North End of this Isle, lived seven score Years, and enjoy'd the free Use of her Senses and Understanding all her days: it is now two years since she died.

THERE is a large Cave, called *King's-Cave*, on the West Side of the *Tarbat*, near the Sea; there is a Well at the Entry, which renders it the more convenient for such as may have occasion to lodg in it.

ABOUT two Miles further from the *Tarbat*, there is a Cave at *Corpich* which hath an Altar in it; there are many small Pieces of petrify'd Substance hanging from the Roof of this Cave.

THERE is a Place where Vessels use to anchor on the West side of this Island, called *Whitfarlan*, about 100 Yards North from the Porter's House.

ABOUT



## 236 A DESCRIPTION of the

ABOUT four Leagues South from the North End of this Isle, lies the Bay *Da'l Yaul*, which is about half a Mile in length; there is a Rock on the North side of the Entry, which they say is five Fathom deep, and but three Fathom within.

ABOUT a League further to the South on the same Coast, lies the small Isles of *Jurab*, within which, there is a good Anchoring-Place; the South Entry is the best: Island *Nin Gowir* must be kept on the left hand; it is easily distinguish'd by its Bigness from the rest of the Isles. *Conney Isle* lies to the North of this Island. There are black and white spotted Serpents in this Isle; their Head being apply'd to the Wound, is by the Natives us'd as the best Remedy for their Poison. Within a Mile of the *Tarbat* there is a Stone erected about eight Foot high. *Loch-Tarbat* on the West side runs Easterly for about five Miles, but is not a Harbour for Vessels, or lesser Boats, for it is altogether rocky.

THE Shore on the West side affords Coral and Coraline. There is a sort of *Dulse* growing on this Coast, of a white Colour.

BETWEEN the North End of *Jurab*, and the Isle *Scarba*, lies the famous and dangerous Gulph, call'd *Cory Vrekan*, about a Mile in breadth;

## Western Islands of Scotland. 237

breadth; it yields an impetuous Current, not to be matched any where about the Isle of *Britain*. The Sea begins to boil and ferment with the Tide of Flood, and resembles the boiling of a Pot; and then increases gradually, until it appear in many Whirlpools, which form themselves in sort of Pyramids, and immediately after spout up as high as the Mast of a little Vessel, and at the same time make a loud Report. These white Waves run two Leagues with the Wind before they break: the Sea continues to repeat these various Motions from the beginning of the Tide of Flood, until it is more than half Flood, and then it decreases gradually until it hath ebb'd about half an hour, and continues to boil till it is within an hour of low Water. This boiling of the Sea is not above a Pistol-shot distant from the Coast of *Scarba Isle*, where the white Waves meet and spout up: they call it the *Kaillach*, *i. e.* an old Hag; and they say that when she puts on her *Kerchief*, *i. e.* the whitest Waves, it is then reckon'd fatal to approach her. Notwithstanding this great Ferment of the Sea, which brings up the least Shell from the Ground, the smallest Fisher-Boat may venture to cross this Gulph at the last hour of the Tide of Flood, and at the last hour of the Tide of Ebb.

THIS Gulph hath its Name from *Brekan*, said to be Son to the King of *Denmark*, who was

## 238 A DESCRIPTION of the

was drowned here, cast ashore in the North of *Jurah*, and buried in a Cave, as appears from the stone Tomb and Altar there.

THE Natives told me, that about three Years ago an *English* Vessel happen'd inadvertently to pass through this Gulph at the time when the Sea began to boil: the Whiteness of the Waves, and their spouting up, was like the breaking of the Sea upon a Rock; they found themselves attracted irresistibly to the white Rock, as they then supposed it to be: this quickly oblig'd them to consult their Safety, and so they betook themselves to the small Boat with all speed, and thought it no small Happiness to land safe in *Jurah*, committing the Vessel under all her Sails to the uncertain Conduct of Tide and Wind. She was driven to the opposite Continent of *Knapdale*, where she no sooner arriv'd, than the Tide and Wind became contrary to one another, and so the Vessel was cast into a Creek, where she was safe; and then the Master and Crew were by the Natives of this Isle conducted to her, where they found her as safe as they left her, tho' all her Sails were still hoisted.

THE Natives gave me an account, that some Years ago a Vessel had brought some Rats hither, which increased so much, that they became very uneasy to the People, but on a sud-

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## Western Islands of Scotland. 239

den they all vanish'd; and now there is not one of them in the Isle.

THERE is a Church here call'd *Killearn*, the Inhabitants are all Protestants, and observe the Festivals of *Christmas*, *Easter*, and *Michaelmas*; they do not open a Grave on *Friday*, and bury none on that day, except the Grave has been open'd before.

THE Natives here are very well proportion'd, being generally black of Complexion, and free from bodily Imperfections. They speak the *Irish* Language, and wear the Plaid, Bonnet, &c. as other Islanders.

THE Isle of *Ila* lies to the West of *Jurah*, from which it is separated by a narrow Channel: it is twenty four Miles in length from South to North, and eighteen from East to West; there are some little Mountains about the middle on the East-side. The Coast is for the most part heathy and uneven, and by consequence not proper for Tillage; the North-end is also full of Heaths and Hills. The South-West and West is pretty well cultivated, and there is six Miles between *Kilrow* on the West, and *Port Escock* in the East, which is arable, and well inhabited. There's about one thousand little Hills on this Road, and all abound with Lime-stone; among which there is lately discovered a Lead Mine in three different Places,

## 240 A DESCRIPTION of the

ces, but it has not turn'd to any account as yet. The Corn growing here is Barley and Oats.

THERE is only one Harbour in this Isle, call'd *Loch-Dale*; it lies near the North end, and is of a great length and breadth; but the depth being in the middle, few Vessels come within half a League of the Land-side.

THERE are several Rivers in this Isle affording Salmon. The Fresh-water Lakes are well stock'd with Trouts, Eels, and some with Salmon; as *Loch-Guirm*, which is four Miles in Circumference, and hath several Forts built on an Island that lies in it.

LOCH-FINLAGAN, about three Miles in Circumference, affords Salmon, Trouts, and Eels: this Lake lies in the Center of the Isle. The Isle *Finlagan*, from which this Lake hath its Name, is in it. It's famous for being once the Court in which the great *Mack-Donald*, King of the Isles, had his Residence; his Houses, Chappel, &c. are now ruinous. His Guards *de Corps*, call'd *Lucht-taeh*, kept Guard on the Lake-side nearest to the Isle; the Walls of their Houses are still to be seen there.

THE High Court of Judicature, consisting of Fourteen, sat always here; and there was an Appeal to them from all the Courts in the Isles:

## Western Islands of Scotland. 241

Isles: the eleventh Share of the Sum in debate was due to the principal Judg. There was a big Stone of seven Foot square, in which there was a deep Impression made to receive the Feet of *Mack-Donald*; for he was crown'd King of the Isles standing in this Stone, and swore that he would continue his Vassals in the possession of their Lands, and do exact Justice to all his Subjects: and then his Father's Sword was put into his hand. The Bishop of *Argyle* and seven Priests anointed him King, in presence of all the Heads of the Tribes in the Isles and Continent, and were his Vassals; at which time the Orator rehears'd a Catalogue of his Ancestors, &c.

THERE are several Forts built in the Isles that are in Fresh-water Lakes, as in *Ilan Loch-guirm*, and *Ilan Viceain*: there is a Fort call'd *Dunnivag* in the South-West side of the Isle, and there are several Caves in different places of it. The largest that I saw was in the North end, and is call'd *Vah Vearnag*; it will contain 200 Men to stand or sit in it. There is a Kila for drying Corn made on the East-side of it; and on the other side there's a Wall built close to the side of the Cave, which was us'd for a Bed-Chamber: it had a Fire on the Floor, and some Chairs about it, and the Bed stood close to the Wall. There is a Stone without the Cave-Door, about which the common People make a Tour Sunways.

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A MILE on the South-West side of the Cave is the celebrated Well, call'd *Tonbir* in *Kpahar*, which in the antient Language is as much as to say, the Well that fallied from one place to another: For it is a receiv'd Tradition among the vulgar Inhabitants of this Isle, and the opposite Isle of *Collonsay*, that this Well was first in *Collonsay*, until an imprudent Woman happen'd to wash her Hands in it, and that immediately after, the Well being thus abus'd, came in an instant to *Ila*, where it is like to continue, and is ever since esteem'd a *Catholicon* for Diseases by the Natives and adjacent Islanders; and the great resort to it is commonly every Quarter day.

IT is common with sick People to make a Vow to come to the Well, and after drinking, they make a Tour Sunways round it, and then leave an Offering of some small Token, such as a Pin, Needle, Farthing, or the like, on the Stone Cover which is above the Well. But if the Patient is not like to recover, they send a Proxy to the Well, who acts as above-mention'd, and carries home some of the Water to be drank by the sick Person.

THERE is a little Chappel beside this Well, to which such as had found the Benefit of the Water, came back and return'd thanks to God for their Recovery.

THERE

THERE are several Rivers on each side this Isle, that afford Salmon: I was told by the Natives, that the *Brion* of *Ila*, a famous Judg, is, according to his own Desire, buried standing on the Brink of the River *Laggan*; having in his right Hand a Spear, such as they use to dart at the Salmon.

THERE are some Isles on the Coast of this Island, as *Island Texa* on the South-West about a Mile in Circumference; and *Island Ouirsa* a Mile likewise in Circumference, with the small Isle call'd *Nave*.

The Names of the CHURCHES in this Isle are as follow:

**K**IL-*Chollim-Kill*, St. Columbus his Church near *Port Escock*, *Kil-Chowan* in the *Rins* on the West-side the Isle; *Kil-Chiaran* in *Rins*, on the West-side *Nerbols* in the *Rins*, St. Columbus his Church in *Laggan*, a Chappel in *Island Nave*, and *Killhan Alen* North-West of *Kidrow*. There is a Cross standing near St. Columbus's or *Port Escock* side, which is ten Foot high. There are two Stones set up at the East-side of *Loch-Finlagan*, and they are six Foot high: all the Inhabitants are Protestants; some among them observe the Festivals of *Christmas* and *Good-Friday*.

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## 244 A DESCRIPTION of the

*Friday.* They are well proportion'd, and indifferently healthful: the Air here is not near so good as that of *Jura*, from which it is but a short Mile distant; but *Ila* is lower and more marshy, which makes it liable to several Diseases that do not trouble those of *Jura*. They generally speak the *Irish* Tongue, all those of the best Rank speak *English*; they use the same Habit and Diet with those of *Jura*. This Isle is annex'd to the Crown of *Scotland*; Sir *Hugh Campbel* of *Caddel* is the King's Steward there, and has one half of the Island. This Isle is reckon'd the furthest West of all the Isles in *Britain*: there is a Village on the West Coast of it call'd *Cal*, i. e. the back part; and the Natives say it was so call'd, because the Antients thought it the back of the World, as being the remotest part on that side of it. The Natives of *Ila*, *Collonsay*, and *Jura* say, that there is an Island lying to the South-West of these Isles, about the distance of a day's sailing, for which they have only a bare Tradition. Mr. *Mack-Swen*, present Minister in the Isle *Jura*, gave me the following Account of it, which he had from the Master of an *English* Vessel that happen'd to anchor at that little Isle, and came afterwards to *Jura*; which is thus:

AS I was sailing some thirty Leagues to the South-West of *Ila*, I was becalm'd near a little Isle, where I dropt Anchor, and went ashore. I found it cover'd all over with long Grass; there

## Western Islands of Scotland. 245

there were abundance of Seals lying on the Rocks, and on the Shore; there is likewise a multitude of Sea-fowls in it: there is a River in the middle, and on each side of it I found great Heaps of Fish-bones of many sorts; there are many Planks and Boards cast up upon the Coast of the Isle, and it being all plain, and almost level with the Sea, I caus'd my Men (being then idle) to erect a heap of the Wood about two Stories high; and that with a Design to make the Island more conspicuous to Sea-faring Men. This Isle is four *English* Miles in length, and one in breadth: I was about thirteen Hours sailing between this Isle and *Jura*. Mr. *John Mack-Swen* above-mention'd, having gone to the Isle of *Collonsay*, some few Days after, was told by the Inhabitants, that from an Eminence near the Monastery, in a fair Day, they saw as it were the top of a little Mountain in the South-West Sea, and that they doubted not but it was Land, tho they never observ'd it before. Mr. *Mack-Swen* was confirm'd in this Opinion by the Account above-mention'd: but when the Summer was over, they never saw this little Hill, as they call'd it, any more. The reason of which is suppos'd to be this, that the high Winds, in all Probability, had cast down the Pile of Wood, that forty Seamen had erected the preceding Year in that Island; which by reason of the Description above recited, we may aptly enough call the Green Island.



## The Isle of Collonsay.

ABOUT two Leagues to the North of *Ila*, lies the Isle *Oronsay*; it is separated from *Collonsay* only at the Tide of Flood: this *Peninsula* is four Miles in Circumference, being for the most part a plain, arable, dry, sandy Soil, and is fruitful in Corn and Grass; it is likewise adorn'd with a Church, Chappel, and Monastery; they were built by the famous *St. Columbus*, to whom the Church is dedicated. There is an Altar in this Church, and there has been a modern Crucifix on it, in which several precious Stones were fix'd; the most valuable of these is now in the Custody of *Mack-Duffie*, in black *Raimused* Village, and it is us'd as a *Catholicon* for Diseases: there are several Burying-places here, and the Tomb-stones for the most part have a two-handed Sword engraven on them. On the South side of the Church within, lie the Tombs of *Mack-Duffie*, and of the Cadets of his Family; there is a Ship under Sail, and a two-handed Sword engraven on the principal Tomb-stone, and this Inscription, *Hic jacit Malcolmus Mac-Duffie de Collonsay*: his Coat of Arms and Colour-Staff is fix'd in a Stone, thro which a Hole is made to hold it. There is a Cross at the East and West sides of this Church, which are now broken; their height was about twelve Foot each: there is a large Cross on the West-side of the Church, of an entire Stone very hard; there

there is a Pedestal of three Steps, by which they ascend to it, it is 16 Foot high, and a Foot and a half broad; there is a large Crucifix on the West-side of this Cross, it has an Inscription underneath, but not legible, being almost wore off by the Injury of Time; the other side has a Tree engraven on it.

ABOUT a quarter of a Mile on the South-side of the Church there is a *Carne*, in which there is a Stone Cross fix'd, call'd *Mack-Duffie's* Cross; for when any of the Heads of this Family were to be interr'd, their Corps was laid on this Cross for some moments, in their way toward the Church.

ON the North-side of the Church there is a square Stone-wall, about two Story high; the Area of it is about fourscore Paces, and it is join'd to the Church Wall: within this Square there is a lesser Square of one Story high, and about 60 Paces wide, three sides of it are built of small Pillars, consisting of two thin Stones each, and each Pillar vaulted above with two thin Stones tapering upwards. There are Inscriptions on two of the Pillars, but few of the Letters are perfect. There are several Houses without the Square, which the Monks liv'd in. There is a Garden at twenty Yards distance on the North-side the Houses.

THE Natives of *Collonsay* are accustom'd, after their Arrival in *Oronsay* Isle, to make a Tour Sunways about the Church, before they enter upon any kind of Business. My Landlord having one of his Family sick of a Fever, ask'd my Book, as a singular Favour, for a few moments. I was not a little surpriz'd at the honest Man's Request, he being illiterate; and when he told me the reason of it, I was no less amaz'd, for it was to fan the Patient's Face with the Leaves of the Book; and this he did at Night. He sought the Book next Morning, and again in the Evening, and then thank'd me for so great a Favour: And told me, the sick Person was much better by it, and thus I understood that they had an antient Custom of fanning the Face of the Sick with the Leaves of the Bible.

THE Isle *Collonsay* is four Miles in length, from East to West, and above a Mile in breadth. The Mould is brown and sandy on the Coast, and affords but a very small Product, tho they plough their Ground three times; the middle is rocky and heathy, which in most places is prettily mingled with thick Ever-greens of *Erica-Baccifera*, *Juniper*, and *Cats-Tail*.

THE Cattle bred here are Cows, Horses and Sheep, all of a low Size. The Inhabitants are generally well proportion'd, and of a black Complexion; they speak only the *Irish* Tongue, and

and use the Habit, Diet, &c. that is used in the Western Isles: they are all Protestants, and observe the Festivals of *Christmas*, *Easter*, and *Good-Friday*; but the Women only observe the Festival of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin. *Kilouran* is the principal Church in this Isle, and the Village in which this Church is, hath its Name from it. There are two ruinous Chapels in the South-side of this Isle. There were two Stone Chests found lately in *Kilouran* Sands, which were composed of five Stones each, and had human Bones in them. There are some Fresh-water Lakes abounding with Trouts in this Isle. There are likewise several Forts here, one of which is call'd *Duncoll*; it is near the middle of the Isle, it hath large Stones in it, and the Wall is seven Foot broad.

THE other Fort is call'd *Dun-Evan*: the Natives have a Tradition among them, of a very little Generation of People, that lived once here, call'd *Lusbirdan*, the same with *Pigmies*. This Isle is the Duke of *Argyle's* Property.

M U L L.

## M U L L.

THE Isle of *Mull* lies on the West Coast, opposite to *Lochaber*, *Swoonard*, and *Moydort*. It is divided from these by a narrow Channel, not exceeding half a League in breadth; the Isle is twenty four Miles long, from South to North, and as many in breadth from East to West. A South-East Moon causes high Tide here. This Isle is in the Sheriffdom of *Argyle*; the Air here is temperately cold and moist; the fresh Breezes that blow from the Mountains do in some measure qualify it: the Natives are accusom'd to take a large Dose of *Aquavita* as a Corrective, when the Season is very moist, and then they are very careful to chew a piece of *Charmel-Root*, finding it to be *Aromatick*; especially when they intend to have a Drinking-bout, for they say this in some measure prevents Drunkenness.

THE Mould is generally black, and brown, both in the Hills and Valleys, and in some parts a Clay of different Colours. The Heaths afford abundance of Turff and Peats, which serve the Natives for good Fuel. There is a great Ridg of Mountains about the middle of the Isle, one of them very high, and therefore call'd *Bein Vore*, i. e. a great Mountain. It is to be seen from all the Western Isles, and a  
confi-

considerable Part of the Continent. Both Mountains and Valleys afford good Pasturage for all sorts of Cattle, as Sheep, Goats, and Deer, which herd among the Hills and Bushes. The Horses are but of a low Size, yet very sprightly; their black Cattle are likewise low in Size, but their Flesh is very delicious and fine. There's Abundance of wild Fowl in the Hills and Valleys; and among 'em the black Cock, Heath-Hen, Tarmagan, and very fine Hawks: the Sea-Coast affords all such Fowl as are to be had in the Western Isles. The Corn growing here, is only Barley and Oats. There's great Variety of Plants in the Hills and Valleys, but there is no Wood here, except a few Coppices on the Coast. There are some Bays, and Places for Anchorage about the Isle. The Bay of *Duart* on the East Side, and to the North of the Castle of that Name, is reckoned a safe Anchoring-place, and frequented by Strangers. *Lochbuy* on the opposite West Side, is but an indifferent Harbour, yet Vessels go into it for Herring.

THE Coast on the West abounds with Rocks for two Leagues West and South-West. The *Bloody Bay* is over against the North End of Island *Columkil*, and only fit for Vessels of about an hundred Tun.

SOME few Miles further to the North-East is *Loch-Levin*, the Entry lies to the Westward,

## 252 A DESCRIPTION of the

ward, and goes twelve Miles Easterly; there are Herrings to be had in it sometimes, and it abounds with Oysters, Cockles, Muscles, Clams, &c.

LOCH-LAY lies on the South Side of *Loch-Levin*; it is proper only for small Vessels; Herring are to be had in it sometimes, and it abounds with Variety of Shell-Fish: the small Isles, called the white Isle, and Isle of Kids, are within this Bay. To the North of *Loch-Levin* lies *Loch-Scaffold*; it enters South West, and runs North-East within it lie the Isles *Eorsa*: and *Inchkenneth*, both which are reputed very fruitful in Cattle and Corn.

THERE is a little Chappel in this Isle, in which many of the Inhabitants of all Ranks are buried. Upon the North Side of *Loch-Scaffold* lies the Isle of *Vevay*, it's three Miles in Circumference, and encompass'd with Rocks and Shelves, but fruitful in Corn, Grass, &c.

TO the West of *Ulva*, lies the Isle *Gometra*, a Mile in Circumference, and fruitful in proportion to the other Isles.

ABOUT four Miles further lie the small Isles, call'd *Kairnburg-More* and *Kernbug-Beg*; they are naturally very strong, fac'd all round with a Rock, having a narrow Entry, and a violent Current of a Tide on each side, so that they

## Western Islands of Scotland. 253

they are almost impregnable. A very few Men are able to defend these two Forts against a thousand. There is a small Garison of the Standing Forces in them at present.

TO the South of these Forts lie the small Isles of *Fladday*, *Lungay*, *Back*, and the *Call* of the *Back*: Cod and Ling are to be had plentifully about all these Islands.

NEAR to the North-East End of *Mull*, lies the Isle *Calve*; it is above two Miles in compass, has a Coppice, and affords good Pasture for all kind of Cattle. Between this Isle, and the Isle of *Mull*, there is a capacious and excellent Bay, called *Tonbir Mory*, i. e. the *Virgin Mary's Well*; because the Water of a Well of that Name, which is said to be Medicinal, runs into the Bay.

ONE of the Ships of the *Spanish Armada*, called the *Florida*, perished in this Bay, having been blown up by one *Smallet* of *Dunbarton*, in the Year 1588. There was a great Sum of Gold and Mony on board the Ship, which disposed the Earl of *Argyle*, and some *Englishmen*, to attempt the Recovery of it; but how far the latter succeeded in this Enterprize, is not generally well known; only that some Pieces of Gold, and Mony, and a Golden Chain was taken out of her. I have seen some fine brass Cannon, some Pieces of Eight, Teeth, Beads

254 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

Beads and Pins that had been taken out of that Ship. Several of the Inhabitants of *Mull* told me that they had conversed with their Relations that were living at the Harbour when this Ship was blown up; and they gave an account of an admirable Providence that appear'd in the Preservation of one Doctor *Beaton*, (the famous Physician of *Mull*) who was on board the Ship when she blew up, and was then sitting on the upper Deck, which was blown up entire, and thrown a good way off; yet the Doctor was saved; and liv'd several Years after.

THE black and white *Indian Nuts* are found on the West side of this Isle; the Natives pulverize the black Kernel or the black Nut, and drink it in boil'd Milk for curing the *Diarrhea*.

THERE are several Rivers in the Isle that afford *Salmon*, and some Rivers abound with the black *Muscle* that breeds Pearl. There are also some fresh-water Lakes that have Trouts and Eels. The whole Isle is very well water'd with many Springs and Fountains. They told me of a Spring in the South side of the Mountain *Bein Vore*, that has a yellow colour'd Stone at the Bottom, which doth not burn, or become hot, tho it should be kept in the Fire for a whole day together.

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*Western Islands of Scotland.* 255

THE *Amphibia* in this Isle are *Seals*, *Otters*, *Vipers*, of the same kind as those described in the Isle of *Skie*, and the Natives use the same Cures for the biting of *Vipers*. Foxes abound in this Isle, and do much hurt among the Lambs and Kids.

THERE are three Castles in the Isle, to wit, the Castle of *Duart*, situated on the East, built upon a Rock, the East side is surrounded by the Sea. This was the Seat of Sir *John Mack-Lean*, Head of the antient Family of the *Mack-Leans*; and is now, together with the Estate, which was the major Part of the Island, become the Duke of *Argyle's* Property, by the Forfeiture of Sir *John*.

SOME Miles further on the West Coast, stands the Castle of *Moy*, at the head of *Lochbuy*, and is the Seat of *Mack-Lean* of *Lochbuy*.

THERE is an old Castle at *Aros* in the middle of the Island, now in ruins. There are some old Forts here called *Dunns*, suppos'd to have been built by the *Danes*. There are two Parish-Churches in the Isle, viz. *Killinchen-Benorth*, *Loch-Levin*, and a little Chappel, call'd *Kilwichk-Ewin*, at the Lake above *Loch-Lay*; each Parish hath a Minister. The Inhabitants are all Protestants, except two or three, who are Roman Catholics; they observe the Festi-



256 A DESCRIPTION of the  
Festivals of *Christmas, Easter, Good-Friday, and  
St. Michael's.* They speak the *Irish* Language  
generally, but those of the best Rank speak  
*English*; they wear the same Habit as the rest of  
the *Islanders.*

J O N A.

THIS *Isle* in the *Irish* Language is called  
*I. Colmkil, i. e. the Isthmus of Columbus*  
the Clergy-Man. *Colum* was his proper Name,  
and the Addition of *Kil*, which signifies a  
Church, was added by the *Islanders* by way of  
excellence; for there were few Churches then in  
the remote and lesser *Isles.*

THE Natives have a Tradition among  
them, That one of the Clergy-Men who accom-  
panied *Columbus* in his Voyage thither, having  
at a good distance espied the *Isle*, and cry'd  
joyfully to *Columbus* in the *Irish* Language, *Chi  
mi, i. e. I see her*; meaning thereby, the Coun-  
try of which they had been in quest: that *Co-  
lumbus* then answer'd, It shall be from hence-  
forth called *Y.*

THE *Isle* is two Miles long from *South* to  
*North*, and one in breadth, from *East* to *West.*  
The

Western Islands of Scotland. 257

The East-side is all arable and plain, fruitful  
in Corn and Grass; the West-side is high and  
rocky.

THIS *Isle* was antiently a Seminary of  
Learning, famous for the severe Discipline and  
Sanctity of *Columbus.* He built two Churches,  
and two Monasteries in it, one for Men, the  
other for Women; which were endowed by  
the Kings of *Scotland*, and of the *Isles*; so that  
the Revenues of the Church then amounted to  
4000 Marks per Ann. *Jona* was the Bishop of  
the *Isles* Cathedral, after the *Scots* lost the *Isle*  
of *Man*, in which King *Cratiliuth* erected a  
Church to the Honour of our Saviour, call'd  
*Fanum Sodorense.* Hence it was that the Bishop  
of the *Isles* was stil'd *Episcopus Sodorensis.* The  
Vicar of *Jona* was Parson of *Soroby* in *Tyre-ty*  
and Dean of the *Isles.* *St. Mary's* Church here  
is built in form of a Cross, the Choir 20 Yards  
long, the Cupilo 21 Foot square, the Body of  
the Church of equal Length with the Choir,  
and the two cross *Isles* half that Length. There  
are two Chappels on each side of the Choir,  
the Entry to them opens with large Pillars  
neatly carv'd in *Basso Relievo*; the Steeple is  
pretty large, the Doors, Windows, &c. are cu-  
riously carv'd; the Altar is large, and of as fine  
Marble as any I ever saw. There are several  
Abbots bury'd within the Church; *Mack-Iikenich*  
his Statue is done in black Marble, as big as the  
Life, in an Episcopal Habit, with a Mitre,  
R Crozier,

258 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

Crozier, Ring, and Stones along the Breast, &c. The rest of the Abbots are done after the same manner; the Inscription of one Tomb is as follows:

*Hic jacet Joannes Mack-Fingone, Abbas de Oui, qui obiit Anno Domini Milesimo Quingentesimo.*

BISHOP Knox, and several Persons of Distinction, as Mack-Leod of Harries, have also been buried here.

THERE'S the Ruins of a Cloister behind the Church, as also of a Library, and under it a large Room; the Natives say it was a Place for Publick Disputations.

THERE is a Heap of Stones without the Church, under which Mackean of Ardmur-chin lies buried. There is an empty Piece of Ground between the Church and the Gardens, in which Murderers, and Children that died before Baptism, were buried. Near to the West-end of the Church in a little Cell lies Columbus his Tomb, but without Inscription; this gave me occasion to cite the *Distich*, asserting that Columbus was buried in Ireland: at which the Natives of Jona seem'd very much displeas'd, and affirm'd that the Irish who said so were impudent Lyars; that Columbus was once buried in this Place, and that none ever came

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 259

came from Ireland since to carry away his Corps, which had they attempted, would have prov'd equally vain and presumptuous.

NEAR St. Columbus's Tomb is St. Martin's Cross, an entire Stone of eight Foot high; it is a very hard and red Stone, with a Mixture of grey in it. On the West-side of the Cross is engraven a large Crucifix, and on the East a Tree; it stands on a Pedestal of the same kind of Stone. At a little further distance is *Dun Ni Manich*, i. e. Monk's Fort, built of Stone and Lime, in form of a Bastion, pretty high. From this Eminence the Monks had a View of all the Families in the *Isle*, and at the same time enjoy'd the free Air. A little further to the West lie the black Stones, which are so call'd, not from their Colour, for that is grey, but from the Effects that Tradition say ensued upon Perjury, if any one became guilty of it after swearing on these Stones in the usual manner; for an Oath made on them was decisive in all Controversies.

MACK-DONALD, King of the *Isles*, deliver'd the Rights of their Lands to his Vassals in the Isles and Continent, with up-lifted Hands, and bended Knees on the black Stones; and in this Posture, before many Witnesses, he solemnly swore, that he would never recall those Rights which he then granted: and this was instead of his Great Seal. Hence it is that when

## 260 A DESCRIPTION of the

one was certain of what he affirm'd, he said positively, I have freedom to swear this Matter upon the black Stones.

ON the South-side the Gate, without the Church, is the Taylors House, for they only wrought in it. The Natives say, that in the time of a Plague, the outer Gate was quite shut up, and that all Provisions were thrown in thro a Hole in the Gate for that purpose.

AT some distance South from *St. Mary's* is *St. Ouran's* Church, commonly call'd *Reliqui Ouran*; the *Saint* of that Name is buried within it.

THE Laird of *Mack-Kinnon* has a Tomb within this Church, which is the stateliest Tomb in the *Ile*. On the Wall above the Tomb there is a Crucifix engraven, having the Arms of the Family underneath; *viz.* a Boar's Head, with a Couple of Sheep's Bones in its Jaws. The Tomb-stone has a Statue as big as the Life, all in Armour; and upon it a Ship under Sail, a Lion at the Head, and another at the Feet. The Inscription on the Tomb is thus: *Hic est Abbas Lachlani, Mack-Fingone, & ejus Filius Ab-batis de I. Aetatis in Dno M<sup>o</sup> cccc Ann.*

THERE are other Persons of Distinction in the Church, all done in Armour.

ON

## Western Islands of Scotland. 261

ON the South-side of the Church, mention'd above, is the Burial-place in which the Kings and Chiefs of Tribes are buried, and over them a Shrine; there was an Inscription, giving an account of each particular Tomb, but Time has worn them off. The middlemost had written on it, *The Tombs of the Kings of Scotland*; of which forty eight lie there.

UPON that on the right hand was written, *The Tombs of the Kings of Ireland*; of which four were buried here.

AND upon that on the left hand was written, *The Kings of Norway*; of which eight were buried here.

ON the right hand within the Entry to the Church-yard there is a Tomb-stone now overgrown with Earth, and upon it there's written, *Hic jacet Joannes Turnbull, quondam Episcopus Cantaburiensis.* This I deliver upon the Authority of Mr. *Jo. Mack-Swen*, Minister of *Jura*, who says he read it.

NEXT to the King's, is the Tomb-stone of *Mack-Donald* of *Ila*; the Arms, a Ship with hoisted Sails, a Standard, four Lions, and a Tree; the Inscription, *Hic jacet Corpus Angusti Mack-Donuill de Ile.*

R 3

IN

262 A DESCRIPTION of the

IN the West-end is the Tombs of *Gilbrid* and *Paul Sporran*, antient Tribes of the *Mack-Donalds*.

THE Families of *Mack-Lean* of *Duart*, *Lochbuy*, and *Coll*, lie next all in Armour, as big as the Life.

*MACK-ALISTER*, a Tribe of the *Mack-Donalds*, *Mack-Ouery* of *Ulgay*, are both done as above.

THERE is a Heap of Stones on which they us'd to lay the Corps while they dug the Grave. There is a Stone likewise erected here, concerning which the credulous Natives say, That whoever reaches out his Arm along the Stone three times, in the Name of the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, will never err in steering the Helm of a Vessel.

ONE Tomb hath a Clergy-man, with this Inscription upon it; *Sancta, &c.*

ABOUT a quarter of a Mile further South is the Church *Romad*, in which several *Prioresfes* are buried; one of the Inscriptions is, *Hic jacet Dna. Anna Terleti, Filia quandam Priorisse de Jona, qua obiit Anno M<sup>o</sup> Christi, Animam Abrahamo commendamus.*

ANO-

Western Islands of Scotland. 263

ANOTHER Inscription is; *Behag Nijn Sorle vic Il' urid Priorissa: i. e. Bathia* Daughter to *Somerled*, Son of *Gilbert*, Priores.

WITHOUT the Nunnery there is such another Square as that beside the Monastery for Men. The two Pavements, which are of a hard red Stone, are yet entire; in the middle of the longest Pavement there is a large Cross, like to that mention'd above, and is call'd *Mack-Lean's* Cross. There are nine Places on the East-side the Isle, call'd Ports for Landing.

THE Dock which was dug out of Port *Charich* is on the shore, to preserve *Columbus's* Boat call'd *Curich*, which was made of Ribs of Wood, and the Outside cover'd with Hides; the Boat was long, and sharp-pointed at both ends: *Columbus* is said to have transported eighteen Clergy-men in this Boat to *Jona*.

THERE are many pretty variegated Stones in the shore below the Dock; they ripen to a green Colour, and are then proper for carving. The Natives say these Stones are fortunate, but only for some particular thing, which the Person thinks fit to name, in exclusion of every thing else.

THERE was a Tribe here call'd *Clan vic n'oster*, from *Ostiarii*; for they are said to have  
R 4 been

264. *A DESCRIPTION of the*

been Porters. The Tradition of these is, that before *Columbus* died, thirty of this Family lived then in *Jona*, and that upon some provocation, *Columbus* entail'd a Curse upon them; which was, That they might all perish to the Number of five, and that they might never exceed that Number, to which they were accordingly reduc'd: and ever since, when any Woman of the Family was in Labour, both she and the other four were afraid of Death; for if the Child that was to be then born, did not die, they say one of the five was sure to die: and this they affirm to have been verifi'd on every such occasion successively to this day. I found one only of this Tribe living in the Isle, and both he and the Natives of this and of all the Western Isles, unanimously declare, that this Observation never fail'd; and all this little Family is now extinct, except this one poor Man.

THE Life of *Columbus*, written in the *Irish* Character, is in the Custody of *John Mack-Neil* in the Isle of *Burray*; another Copy of it is kept by *Mack-Donald* of *Benbecula*.

THE Inhabitants have a Tradition, that *Columbus* suffer'd no Women to stay in the Isle except the Nuns; and that all the Tradesmen who wrought in it were oblig'd to keep their Wives and Daughters in the opposite little Isle, call'd on that account *Womens-Isle*. They say likewise,

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 265

likewise, that it was to keep Women out of the Isle, that he would not suffer Cows, Sheep or Goats to be brought to it.

*BEDA*, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, Lib. 3. Cap. 4. gives this account of him: In the Year of our Lord 565. (at the time that *Justin* the Younger succeeded *Justinian* in the Government of the *Roman* Empire) the famous *Columba*, a Presbyter and Abbot, but in Habit and Life a Monk, came from *Ireland* to *Britain* to preach the Word of God to the Northern Provinces of the *Picts*; that is, to those who by high and rugged Mountains are separated from the Southern Provinces. For the Southern *Picts*, who have their Habitation on this side the same Hills, had, as they affirm themselves, renounc'd Idolatry, and receiv'd the Faith a long time before, by the preaching of *Ninian* the Bishop, a most Reverend and Holy Man, of the Country of the *Britons*, who was regularly educated at *Rome*, in the Mysteries of Truth.

IN the ninth Year of *Meilochen*, Son to *Pridius* King of *Picts*, a most powerful King, *Columbus*, by his Preaching and Example, converted that Nation to the Faith of Christ. Upon this account they gave him the Isle above-mention'd (which he calls *Hii*, Book 3. Cap. 3.) to erect a Monastery in; which his Successors possess to this day, and where he himself was buried,



266 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

ried, in the seventy seventh Year of his Age, and the thirty second after his going to *Britain* to preach the Gospel. He built a noble Monastery in *Ireland*, before his coming to *Britain*; from both which Monasteries he and his Disciples founded several other Monasteries in *Britain* and *Ireland*: among all which, the Monastery of the Island in which his Body is interr'd, has the Preheminence. The Isle has a Rector, who is always a Presbyter-Abbot, to whose Jurisdiction the whole Province, and the Bishops themselves ought to be subject, tho' the thing be unusual, according to the Example of that first Doctor, who was not a Bishop, but a Presbyter and Monk; and of whose Life and Doctrine some things are said to be wrote by his Disciples. But whatever he was, this is certain, that he left Successors eminent for their great Chastity, divine Love, and regular Institution.

THIS Monastery furnish'd Bishops to several Diocesses of *England* and *Scotland*; and amongst others, *Aidanus*, who was sent from thence, and was Bishop of *Lindisfairn*, now *Holy-Island*.

The

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 267

*The Isle of Tire-iy, is so call'd, from Tire a Country, and Iy an Isthmus; the Rocks in the narrow Channel seem to favour the Etymology.*

THIS Isle lies about eight Leagues to the West of *Jona*, or *I. Colm-Kil*. The Land is low and moorish, but there are two little Hills on the South West side; the Mould is generally brown, and for the most part sandy. The Western side is rocky for about three Leagues; the Isle affords no convenient Harbour for Ships, but has been always valued for its extraordinary Fruitfulness in Corn, yet being till'd every year, it is become less fruitful than formerly. There is a plain Piece of Ground about six Miles in compass on the East-Coast, call'd the *Rive*; the Grass is seldom suffer'd to grow the length of half an inch, being only kept as a Common, yet is believ'd to excel any Parcel of Land of its Extent in the Isles, or opposite Continent: there are small Channels in it, thro' which the Tide of Flood comes in, and it sometimes overflows the whole.

THE Isle is four Miles in length from the South-East to the North-West; the Natives for the most part live on Barley-Bread, Butter, Milk, Cheese, Fish, and some eat the Roots of Silver-weed; there are but few that eat any  
Flesh,

## 268 A DESCRIPTION of the

Flesh, and the Servants use Water-Gruel often with their Bread. In plentiful Years the Natives drink Ale generally. There are three Ale-houses in the Isle; the Brewers preserve their Ale in large earthen Vessels, and say they are much better for this purpose than those of Wood; some of them contain twelve *English* Gallons. Their Measure for Drink is a third part larger than any I could observe in any other part of *Scotland*. The Ale that I had in the Inn being too weak, I told my Host of it, who promis'd to make it better; for this end he took a *Hætic-Stone*, and having made it red hot in the Fire, he quench'd it in the Ale. The Company and I were satisfy'd that the Drink was a little more brisk, and I told him that if he could add some more Life to our Ale, he would extremely oblige the Company. This he frankly undertook; and to effect it, toasted a Barley-Cake, and having broke it in pieces, he put it into the Dish with the Ale: and this Experiment we found as effectual as the first. I enquir'd of him if he had any more Art to revive our Ale, and then he would make it pretty good; he answer'd, that he knew of nothing else but a Malt-Cake, which he had not then ready: and so we were oblig'd to content our selves with what pains had been already us'd to revive our Drink. The Natives preserve their Yeast by an Oaken Wyth, which they twist and put into it; and for future use,

keep

## Western Islands of Scotland. 269

keep it in Barley-Straw. The Cows and Horses are of a very low Size in this Isle, being in the Winter and Spring-time often reduc'd to eat Sea-Ware. The Cows give plenty of Milk; when they have enough of fresh Sea-Ware to feed on, it fattens them: the Horses pace naturally, and are very sprightly, tho' little. The Ground abounds with Flint-stone; the Natives tell me they find pieces of Sulphur in several places. The West Winds drive the ordinary *Indian* Nuts to the shore of this Isle, and the Natives use them as above, for removing the *Diarrhea*; and the Water of the Well called *Tombir* in *Donich*, is by the Natives drunk as a *Catholicon* for Diseases.

SOME Years ago, about one hundred and sixty little Whales, the biggest not exceeding twenty Foot long, run themselves ashore in this Isle, very seasonably, in time of Scarcity, for the Natives did eat them all; and told me that the Sea-Pork, *i. e.* the Whale, is both wholesom, and very nourishing Meat. There is a Fresh-water Lake in the middle of the Isle, on the East-side of which there is an old Castle now in Ruins. The Isle being low and moorish, is unwholesom, and makes the Natives subject to the Ague. The Inhabitants living in the South-East Parts, are for the most part bald, and have but very thin Hair on their Heads. There is a Cave in the South-West, which the Natives are accusom'd to watch in the Night,

and

270 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

and then take many Cormorants in it. There are several Forts in the Isle; one in the middle of it, and *Dun-Taelk* in *Baelly Petris*: they are in form the same with those in the Northern Isles. There are several great and small Circles of Stones in this Isle. The Inhabitants are all Protestants; they observe the Festivals of *Christmas, Good-Friday, Easter, and St. Michael's Day*. Upon the latter there is a general Cavalcade, at which all the Inhabitants rendezvous. They speak the *Irish* Tongue, and wear the Highland Dress. This Isle is the Duke of *Argyle's* Property, it being one of the Isles lately possess'd by the Laird of *Mack-Lean*: the Parish-Church in the Isle is call'd *Soroby*, and is a Parsonage.

The

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 271*The Isle of COLL.*

**T**HIS Isle lies about half a League to the East and North-East of *Tire-iy*, from which it hath been sever'd by the Sea. It is ten Miles in length, and three in breadth; it is generally compos'd of little rocky Hills, cover'd with Heath. The North-side is much plainer, and arable Ground, affording Barley and Oats; the Inhabitants always feed on the latter, and those of *Tire-iy* on the former. The Isle of *Coll* produces more Boys than Girls, and the Isle of *Tire-iy* more Girls than Boys; as if Nature intended both these Isles for mutual Alliances, without being at the trouble of going to the adjacent Isles or Continent to be matched. The Parish-Book, in which the number of the Baptized is to be seen, confirms this Observation.

**T**HERE are several Rivers in this Isle that afford Salmon. There is a Fresh-water Lake in the South-East side, which hath Trouts and Eels. Within a quarter of a Mile lies a little Castle, the Seat of *Mack-Lean* of *Coll*, the Proprietor of the Isle: he and all the Inhabitants are Protestants; they observe the Festivals of *Christmas, Good-Friday, Easter, and St. Michael*: at the latter they have a general Cavalcade. All the Inhabitants speak the *Irish* Tongue, (a few

## 272 A DESCRIPTION of the

few excepted) and wear the Habit us'd by the rest of the Islanders. This *Isle* is much wholesomer than that of *Tire-iy*. I saw a Gentleman of *Mack-Lean* of *Coll's* Family here, aged eighty five, who walked up and down the Fields daily.

COD and Ling abound on the Coast of this *Isle*, and are of a larger Size here than in the adjacent *Isles* or *Continent*.

ON the South-East Coast of this *Isle* lie the Train of Rocks, call'd the *Carn of Coll*; they reach about half a League from the Shore, and are remarkable for their Fatality to Sea-faring Men, of which there are several late Instances. There is no venomous Creature in this Island, or that of *Tire-iy*.

R U M.

## Western Islands of Scotland. 273

R U M.

THIS *Isle* lies about four Leagues South from *Skie*; it is mountainous and heathy, but the Coast is arable and fruitful. The *Isle* is five Miles long from South to North, and three from East to West; the North end produces some Wood. The Rivers on each side afford Salmon. There is plenty of Land and Sea-Fowl; some of the latter, especially the *Puffin*, build in the Hills as much as in the Rocks on the Coast, in which there are abundance of Caves: the Rock facing the West side is red, and that on the East side grey. The Mountains have some hundred of Deer grazing in them. The Natives gave me an account of a strange Observation, which they say proves fatal to the Posterity of *Lachlin*, a *Cadet* of *Mack-Lean* of *Coll's* Family; That if any of them shoot at a Deer on the Mountain *Finchra*, he dies suddenly, or contracts some violent Distemper, which soon puts a Period to his Life. They told me some Instances to this purpose: whatever may be in it, there is none of the Tribe above-nam'd will ever offer to shoot the Deer in that Mountain.

THE Bay *Loch-Screford* on the East side is not fit for anchoring, except without the Entry.

S

THERE

THERE is a Chappel in this *Isle*; the Natives are Protestants; *Mack-Lean* of *Coll* is Proprietor; and the Language and Habit the same with the Northern *Isles*.

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*Isle M U C K.*

IT lies a little to the South-West of *Ram*, being four Miles in Circumference, all surrounded with a Rock; it is fruitful in Corn and Grass: the Hawks in the Rocks here are reputed to be very good. The Cattle, Fowls, and Amphibia of this Island, are the same as in other *Isles*; the Natives speak the *Irish* Tongue only, and use the Habit wore by their Neighbours.

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*Isle*

*Isle CANNAY.*

THIS *Isle* lies about half a Mile of *Ram*; it is two Miles from South to North, and one from East to West. It is for the most part surrounded with a high Rock, and the whole fruitful in Corn and Grass: The South end hath plenty of Cod and Ling.

THERE is a high Hill in the North end, which disorders the Needle in the Compass: I laid the Compass on the stony Ground near it, and the Needle went often round with great Swiftnes, and instead of settling towards the North, as usual, it settled here due East. The Stones in the Surface of the Earth are black, and the Rock below facing the Sea is red; some affirm that the Needle of a Ship's Compass, sailing by the Hill, is disorder'd by the Force of the Magnet in this Rock: but of this I have no Certainty.

THE Natives call this *Isle* by the Name *Tarsin* at Sea; the Rock *Heisker* on the South end abounds with wild Geese in *August*, and then they cast their Quills. The Church in this *Isle* is dedicated to *St. Columbus*. All the Natives are Roman Catholicks; they use the Language and Habit of the other *Isles*. *Allan Mack-Donald* is Proprietor. There is good Anchorage on the North-East of this *Isle*.



## A Description of the Isle of E G G.

THIS Isle lies to the South of *Skie* about four Leagues; it is three Miles in length, a Mile and a half in breadth, and about nine in circumference: It is all rocky and mountainous from the middle towards the West; the East side is plainer, and more arable: the whole is indifferent good for Pasturage and Cultivation. There is a Mountain in the South end, and on the top of it there is a high Rock call'd *Skur Egg*, about an hundred and fifty Paces in Circumference, and has a fresh-water Lake in the middle of it; there is no access to this Rock but by one Passage, which makes it a natural Fort. There is a Harbour on the South-East side of this Isle, which may be enter'd into by either side the small Isle without it. There is a very big Cave on the South West side of this Isle, capable of containing several hundreds of People. The Coast guarding the North-West is a soft Quarry of white Stone, having some Caves in it. There is a Well in the Village call'd *Fivepennies*, reputed efficacious against several Distempers: the Natives told me that it never fails to cure any Person of their first Disease, only by drinking a Quantity of it for the space of two or three days; and that if a Stranger lie at this Well in the night-time, it

it will procure a Deformity in some part of his Body, but has no such effect on a Native; and this they say hath been frequently experimented.

THERE is a heap of Stones here, call'd *Martin Dessil*, i. e. a Place consecrated to the Saint of that Name, about which the Natives oblige themselves to make a Tour round Sunways.

THERE is another heap of Stones, which they say was consecrated to the Virgin *Mary*.

IN the Village on the South Coast of this Isle there is a Well, call'd *St. Katherine's Well*; the Natives have it in great Esteem, and believe it to be a *Catholicon* for Diseases. They told me that it had been such ever since it was consecrated by one Father *Hugh*, a Popish Priest, in the following manner: He oblig'd all the Inhabitants to come to this Well, and then imploy'd them to bring together a great heap of Stones at the Head of the Spring, by way of Penance. This being done, he said Mass at the Well, and then consecrated it; he gave each of the Inhabitants a piece of Wax Candle, which they lighted, and all of them made the *Dessil*, of going round the Well Sunways, the Priest leading them: and from that time it was accounted unlawful to boil any Meat with the Water of this Well.

THE Natives observe St. *Katherine's* Anniversary; all of them come to the Well, and having drank a Draught of it, they make the *Dessil* round it Sunways; this is always perform'd on the 15th Day of *April*. The Inhabitants of this Isle are well proportion'd; they speak the *Irish* Tongue only, and wear the Habit of the Islanders; they are all Roman Catholicks, except one Woman, that is a Protestant.

THERE is a Church here on the East side the Isle, dedicated to St. *Donnan*, whose Anniversary they observe.

ABOUT thirty Yards from the Church there is a Sepulchral Urn under ground; it is a big Stone hewn to the bottom, about four Foot deep, and the Diameter of it is about the same breadth; I caus'd 'em to dig the ground above it, and we found a flat thin Stone covering the Urn: it was almost full of human Bones, but no Head among them, and they were fair and dry. I enquir'd of the Natives what was become of the Heads, and they could not tell; but one of them said, perhaps their Heads had been cut off with a two-handed Sword, and taken away by the Enemy. Some few paces to the North of the Urn there is a narrow stone Passage under ground, but how

how far it reaches they could give me no account.

THE Natives dare not call this Isle by its ordinary Name of *Egg*, when they are at Sea, but Island *Nim-Ban-More*, i. e. the Isle of big Women. St. *Donnan's* Well, which is in the South-West end, is in great Esteem by the Natives; for St. *Donnan* is the celebrated Tutelar of this Isle. The Natives do not allow Protestants to come to their Burial.

THE Proprietors of the Isle are *Allan Mack-Donald* of *Moydort*, and *Allan Mack-Donald* of *Moron*.

## St. KILDA, or HIRT.

THE first of these Names is taken from one *Kilder*, who lived here; and from him the large Well *Tombir-Kilda* has also its Name. *Hirta* is taken from the *Irish Ier*, which in that Language signifies *West*; this Isle lies directly opposite to the Isles of *North-Vist*, *Harries*, &c. It is reckon'd 18 Leagues from the former, and 20 from *Harries*. This Isle is by *Peter Goas*, in a Map he made of it at *Rotterdam*, call'd *St. Kilder*; it is the remotest of all the *Scots North-West Isles*: It is about two Miles in length, and one in breadth; it is faced all round with a steep Rock, except the Bay on the South-East, which is not a Harbour fit for any Vessel, tho in the time of a Calm one may land upon the Rock, and get up into the Island with a little climbing. The Land rises pretty high in the middle, and there is one Mountain higher than any other part of the Island. There are several Fountains of good Water on each side this Isle. The Corn produc'd here is Oats and Barley, the latter is the largest in the Western Isles.

THE Horses and Cows here are of a lower Size than in the adjacent Isles, but the Sheep differ only in the Bigness of their Horns, which are very long.

THERE

THERE is an antient Fort on the South end of the Bay, call'd *Dun-fir-Volg*, i. e. the Fort of the *Volscij*: This is the Sense put upon the Word by the *Antiquaries* of the opposite Isles of *Vist*.

THE Isle *Soa* is near half a Mile distant from the West-side of *St. Kilda*; it is a Mile in circumference, very high, and steep all round *Borrera*, lies above two Leagues North of *St. Kilda*; it is near a Mile in circumference, the most of it surrounded with a high Rock. The largest and the two lesser Isles are good for Pasturage, and abound with a prodigious Number of Sea-fowl, from *March* till *September*; the *Solan* Geese are very numerous here, insomuch that the Inhabitants commonly keep yearly above twenty thousand young and old in their little stone Houses, of which there are some hundreds for preserving their Fowls, Eggs, &c. They use no Salt for preserving their Fowl; the Eggs of the Sea Wild-fowl are preserv'd some Months in the Ashes of Peats, and are astringent to such as be not accusom'd to eat them.

THE *Solan* Goose is in size somewhat less than a Land-Goose, and of a white Colour, except the tips of the Wings, which are black, and the top of their Head, which is yellow; their Bill is long, small pointed, and very hard, and pierces an Inch deep into Wood, in their  
Descent

## 282 A DESCRIPTION of the

Descent after a Fish laid on a Board, as some use to catch 'em. When they sleep, they put their Head under their Wings, but one of 'em keeps watch, and if that be surpriz'd by the Fowler (which often happens) all the rest are then easily caught by the neck, one after another; but if the Sentinel gives warning, by crying loud, then all the Flock make their Escape. When this Fowl fishes for Herring, it flies about sixty Yards high, and then descends perpendicularly into the Sea, but after all other Fish it descends a-squint: the reason for this manner of pursuing the Herrings, is, because they are in greater Shoals than any other Fish whatsoever.

THERE is a barren Tribe of *Solan* Geese, that keep always together, and never mix among the rest that build and hatch. The *Solan* Geese come to those Islands in *March*, taking the advantage of a South-West Wind: before their coming, they send a few of their Number, as Harbingers before them, and when they have made a Tour round the Isles, they return immediately to their Company; and in a few days after, the whole Flock comes together, and stays till *September*. The Natives make a Pudding of the Fat of this Fowl, in the Stomach of it, and boil it in their Water-gruel, which they call *Brochan*; they drink it likewise for removing the Cough: It is by daily Experience found to be an excellent Vulnerary.

THE

## Western Islands of Scotland. 283

THE Inhabitants eat the *Solan* Goose-Egg raw, and by Experience find it to be a good Pectoral. The *Solan* Geese are daily making up their Nests from *March* till *September*; they make 'em in the Shelves of high Rocks; they fish, hatch, and make their Nests by turns, and they amass for this end a great Heap of Grass, and such other things as they catch floating on the Water: the Steward of *St. Kilda*, told me, that they had found a red Coat in a Nest, a Brass Sun-dial, and an Arrow, and some *Molucca* Beans in another Nest. This *Solan* Goose is believ'd to be the sharpest sighted of all Sea-fowls; it preserves five or six Herrings in its Gorget entire, and carries them to the Nest, where it spews them out to serve as Food to the young ones: they are observ'd to go a-fishing to several Isles that lie about thirty Leagues distant, and carry the Fish in their Gorget all that way; and this is confirm'd by the *English* Hooks, which are found sticking to the Fish-Bones in their Nests, for the Natives have no such Hooks among them.

THEY have another Bird here call'd *Fulmar*; it is a grey Fowl, about the size of a Moor-Hen: it has a strong Bill, with wide Nostrils; as often as it goes to Sea, it is a certain sign of a Western Wind, for it sits always on the Rock, when the Wind is to blow from any other Quarter. This Fowl, the Natives say, picks its Food



284 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

Food out of live Whales, and that it eats Sorrel; for both those sorts of Food are found in its Nest. When any one approaches the *Fulmar*, it spouts out at its Bill about a Quart of pure Oil; the Natives surprize the Fowl, and preserve the Oil, and burn it in their Lamps: it is good against *Rheumatick* Pains and Aches in the Bones, the Inhabitants of the adjacent Isles value it as a *Catholicon* for Diseases; some take it for a Vomit, others for a Purge. It has been successfully us'd against *Rheumatick* Pains in *Edinburgh* and *London*: in the latter it has been lately us'd to assuage the swelling of a strain'd Foot, a Cheek swell'd with the Tooth-ach, and for discussing a hard Boil; and prov'd successful in all the three Cases.

THERE is plenty of Cod and Ling, of a great size, round this Isle, the Improvement of which might be of great advantage.

THE Inhabitants are about two hundred in number, and are well proportion'd; they speak the *Irish* Language only; their Habit is much like that us'd in the adjacent Isles, but coarser: They are not subject to many Diseases; they contract a Cough as often as any Strangers land and stay for any time among them, and it continues for some eight or ten Days; they say the very Infants on the Breast are infected by it. The Men are stronger than the Inhabitants of the opposite Western Isles; they

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 285

they feed much on Fowl, especially the *Solan* Geese, *Puffin*, and *Fulmar*, eating no Salt with them. This is believ'd to be the cause of a Leprosy, that is broke out among them of late: one of them that was become corpulent, and had his Throat almost shut up, being advis'd by me to take Salt with his Meat, to exercise himself more in the Fields than he had done of late, to forbear eating of fat Fowl, and the fat Pudding call'd *Giben*, and to eat Sorrel; was very much concern'd, because all this was very disagreeable; and my advising him to eat Sorrel, was perfectly a Surprize to him: but when I bid him consider how the fat *Fulmar* eat this Plant, he was at last dispos'd to take my Advice; and by this means alone, in few days after, his Voice was much clearer, his Appetite recover'd, and he was in a fair way of Recovery. Twelve of these Lepers died the Year after of this Distemper, and were in the same Condition with this Man.

BOTH Sexes have a Genius for Poesy, and compose entertaining Verses and Songs in their own Language, which is very Emphatical. Some Years ago, about twenty of their Number happen'd to be confin'd in the *Rock Stack N'armin* for several days together, without any kind of Food; the Season then not favouring their Endeavours to return home, one of their Number pluck'd all their Knives out of the Hafts, wrought a Hook out of each, and then beat them



them out to their former length; he had a Stone for an Anvil, and a Dagger for a Hammer and File: and with these rude Hooks, and a few forry Fishing-Lines, they purchas'd Fish for their Maintenance, during their Confinement for several Days in the Rock. All the Men in the Isle having gone to the Isle *Boreray* for purchase, the Rope that fasten'd their Boat happen'd to break; and by this unlucky Accident, the Boat was quite lost, and the poor People confin'd in the Isle from the middle of *March* till the latter end of *May*, without so much as a Crust of Bread; but they had Sheep, Fowl and Fish in abundance. They were at a loss how to acquaint their Wives and Friends, that all of them were alive; but to effect this, they kindled as many Fires on the top of an Eminence as there were Men in number: this was no sooner seen, and the Fires counted, than the Women understood the Signal, and were so overjoy'd at this unexpected News, that they fell to labour the Ground with the Foot-Spade, a Fatigue they had never been accusom'd to; and that Year's Product of Corn was the most plentiful that they had for many Years before. After the Steward's Arrival in the Isle, about the end of *May*, he sent his Galley to bring home all the Men confin'd in the Isle, to their so much long'd for *St. Kilda*; where the mutual Joy between them and their Wives, and other Relations, was extraordinary.

THE

THE Inhabitants are of the Reform'd Religion; they assemble in the Church-yard on the Lord's Day, and in the Morning they say the Lord's Prayer, Creed, and Ten Commandments: They work at no Employment till Monday, neither will they allow a Stranger to work sooner. The Officer, or Steward's Deputy commonly, and sometimes any of their Neighbours, baptize their Children soon after they are born; and in the following Form: *A. I.* I baptize you to your Father and Mother, in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. They marry early and publickly, all the Natives of both Sexes being present; the Officer who performs the Marriage tenders a Crucifix to the married Couple, who lay their right Hands on it, and then the Marriage is ratified.

THEY observe the Festivals of *Christmas*, *Easter*, *Good-Friday*; and that of *All-Saints*; upon the latter they bake a large Cake, in form of a Triangle, furrow'd round, and it must be all eaten that Night. They are hospitable, and charitable to Strangers, as well as the Poor belonging to themselves, for whom all the Families contribute a Proportion monthly, and at every Festival each Family sends them a piece of Mutton or Beef.

THEY

THEY swear decisive Oaths by the Crucifix, and this puts an end to any Controversy; for there is not one Instance, or the least Suspicion of Perjury among them. The Crucifix is of Brass, and about nine Inches in length; it lies upon the Altar, but they pay no religious Worship to it. One of the Inhabitants was so sincere, that (rather than forswear himself on the Crucifix) he confess'd a Capital Crime before the Minister, and my self. They never swear, or steal, neither do they take God's Name in vain at any time; they are free from Whoredom and Adultery, and of those other Immoralities that abound so much every where else.

ONE of the Inhabitants call'd *Roderick*, a Fellow that could not read, obtruded a false Religion upon the credulous People, which he pretended to have receiv'd from *St. John* the Baptist. It is remarkable, that in his Rhapsodies, which he call'd Prayers, he had the word *Eli*; and to this purpose, *Eli* is our Preserver. There is a little Hill, upon which he says *John* the Baptist deliver'd Sermons and Prayers to him; this he call'd *John's-Bush*, and made the People believe it was so Sacred, that if either Cow or Sheep did taste of its Grass, they were to be kill'd immediately after, and the Owners were to eat them, but never without the Company of the Impostor. He made them likewise believe

believe that each of them had a Tutelar Saint in Heaven to intercede for them, and the Anniversary of every one of those was to be necessarily observ'd, by having a splendid Treat, at which the Impostor was always the principal Person. He taught the Women a Devout Hymn, which he said he had from the *Virgin Mary*; he made them believe that it secur'd any Woman from Miscarriage that could repeat it by heart, and each of them paid the Impostor a Sheep for it.

UPON Mr. *Campbel's* arrival and mine in *St. Kilda*, *Roderick* made a publick Recantation of his Imposture; and being then by us brought to the Isle of *Harries*, and afterwards to the Isle of *Skie*, he has made publick Confession in several Churches of his Converse with the Devil, and not *John* the Baptist, as he pretended, and seems to be very penitent. He is now in *Skie* Isle, from whence he is never to return to his Native Country. His Neighbours are heartily glad to be rid of such a Villain, and are now happily deliver'd from the Errors he impos'd upon them. The Isle is the Laird of *Mack-Leod's* Property, he is Head of one of the most antient Tribes in the Isles; he bestows the Isle upon a *Cadet* of his Name, whose Fortune is low, to maintain his Family, and he is called Steward of it: he visits the Isle once every Summer, to demand the Rents, viz. Down, Wool, Butter, Cheese, Cows, Horses, Fowl,

290 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

Fowl, Oil, and Barley. The Steward's Deputy is one of the Natives, and stays always upon the place; he has free Lands, and an Omer of Barley from each Family; and has the honour of being the first and last in their Boat, as they go and come to the lesser Isles or Rocks. The antient measure of Omer and Cubit continues to be us'd in this Isle. They have neither Gold nor Silver, but barter among themselves and the Steward's Men for what they want. Some years ago the Steward determin'd to exact a Sheep from every Family in the Isle, the number amounting to twenty seven; and for this he put them in mind of a late Precedent, of their having given the like number to his Predecessor. But they answer'd, that what they gave then, was voluntary, and upon an extraordinary occasion of his being Wind-bound in the Isle, and that this was not to be a Custom afterwards. However the Steward sent his Brother, and with him a competent number of Men, to take the Sheep from them by force; but the Natives arming themselves with their Daggers and Fishing-Rods, attack'd the Steward's Brother, giving him some blows on the head, and forc'd him and his Party to retire, and told him that they would pay no new Taxes: and by this stout resistance, they preserv'd their Freedom from such Imposition.

THE Inhabitants live contentedly together in a little Village on the East-side St. *Kilda*, which

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 291

which they commonly call the Country; and the Isle *Borreray*, which is little more than two Leagues distant from them, they call the Northern Country. The distance between their Houses is by them called the High-street: their Houses are low built, of Stone, and a Cement of dry Earth; they have Couples and Ribs of Wood cover'd with thin earthen Turff, thatch'd over these with Straw, and the Roof secur'd on each side with double ropes of Straw or Heath, pois'd at the end with many Stones: their Beds are commonly made in the Wall of their Houses, and they lie on Straw, but never on Feathers or Down, tho' they have them in greater plenty than all the Western Isles besides. The Reason for making their Bed-room in the Walls of their Houses, is to make room for their Cows, which they take in during the Winter and Spring.

THEY are very exact in their Properties, and divide both the Fishing as well as Fowling Rocks with as great niceness as they do their Corn and Grass; one will not allow his Neighbour to sit and fish on his Seat, for this being a part of his Possession, he will take care that no encroachment be made upon the least part of it: and this with a particular regard to their Successors, that they may lose no Privilege depending upon any parcel of their Farm. They have but one Boat in the Isle, and every Man hath a share in it, proportionably to the Acres

292 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

of Ground for which they pay Rent. They are stout Rowers, and will tug at the Oar for a long time, without any intermission. When they sail, they use no Compass, but take their measures from the Sun, Moon, or Stars; and they rely much on the course of the various Flocks of Sea-Fowl: and this last is their surest Directory. When they go to the lesser Isles and Rocks to bring home Sheep, or any other Purchase, they carry an Iron Pot with them, and each Family furnishes one by turns; and the Owner on such Occasions has a small Tax paid him by all the Families in the Isle, which is by them call'd the Pot-penny.

THERE was another Tax paid by each Family to one of the Natives, as often as they kindled a Fire in any of the lesser Isles or Rocks, and that for the use of his Steel and Flint; and this was by them call'd the Fire-penny.

THIS Tax was very advantageous to the Proprietor, but very uneasy to the Commonwealth, who could not be furnish'd with Fire on these Occasions any other way. But I told them that the Chrystal growing in the Rock on the shore would yield Fire, if struck with the back of a Knife, and of this I shew'd them an Experiment; which when they saw, was a very surprizing, and to them a profitable Discovery in their esteem, being such as could be had by every Man in the Isle; and at  
the

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 293

the same time deliver'd them from an endless Charge: but it was very disobliging to the poor Man who lost his Tax by it.

THE Inhabitants of *St. Kilda* excel all those I ever saw in climbing Rocks: they told me that some years ago their Boat was split to pieces upon the West side of *Borrera* Isle, and they were forc'd to lay hold on a bare Rock, which was steep, and above twenty Fathom high; notwithstanding this difficulty, some of them climb'd up to the top, and from thence let down a Rope and Plads, and so drew up all the Boats Crew, tho the climbing this Rock would seem impossible to any other except themselves.

THIS little Commonwealth hath two Ropes of about twenty four Fathoms length each, for climbing the Rocks, which they do by turns; the Ropes are secur'd all round with Cows Hides salted for the use, and which preserves them from being cut by the edge of the Rocks. By the assistance of these Ropes they purchase a great number of Eggs and Fowl: I have seen them bring home in a Morning twenty nine large Baskets all full of Eggs; the least of the Baskets contain'd four hundred big Eggs, and the rest eight hundred and above of lesser Eggs. They had with them at the same time about two thousand Sea-Fowl, and some Fish, together with some Limpets, call'd *Patella*,  
T 3 the



294 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

the biggest I ever saw. They catch many Fowls likewise, by laying their Gins, which are made of Horse-hair, having a Noose at the distance of two Foot each; the ends of the Rope at which the Noose hangs, are secur'd by Stone.

THE Natives gave me an account of a very extraordinary Risque which one of them ran as laying his Gins, which was thus: As he was walking barefoot along the Rock where he had fixed his Gin, he happen'd to put his Toe in a Noose, and immediately fell down the Rock, but hung by the Toe, the Gin being strong enough to hold him, and the Stones that secur'd it on each end being heavy: the poor Man continu'd hanging thus for the space of a Night on a Rock twenty Fathom height above the Sea, until one of his Neighbours hearing him cry, came to his rescue, drew him up by the Feet, and so sav'd him.

THESE poor People do sometimes fall down as they climb the Rocks, and perish: Their Wives on such occasions make doleful Songs, which they call Lamentations. The chief Topicks are their Courage, their Dexterity in Climbing, and their great Affection which they shew'd to their Wives and Children.

IT

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 295

IT is ordinary with a Fowler, after he has got his Purchase of Fowls, to pluck the fattest, and carry it home to his Wife as a mark of his Affection; and this is called the Rock-Fowl.

THE Batchelors do in like manner carry this Rock-Fowl to their Sweet-hearts, and it is the greatest Present they can make, considering the danger they run in acquiring it.

THE richest Man in the Isle has not above eight Cows, eighty Sheep, and two or three Horses. If a Native here have but a few Cattle, he will marry a Woman, tho she have no other Portion from her Friends but a Pound of Horse-hair, to make a Gin to catch Fowls.

THE Horses here are very low of stature, and employ'd only to carry home their Peats and Turff, which is their Fuel. The Inhabitants ride their Horses (which were but eighteen in all) at the Anniversary Cavalcade of *All-Saints*: this they never fail to observe. They begin at the shore, and ride as far as the Houses; they use no Saddles of any kind, nor Bridle, except a Rope of Straw which manages the Horse's head; and when they have all taken the Horses by turns, the Show is over for that time.

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THIS



THIS Isle produces the finest Hawks in the Western Isles, for they go many Leagues for their Prey, there being no Land-Fowl in *St. Kilda* proper for them to eat, except Pigeons and Plovers.

ONE of the Inhabitants of *St. Kilda* being some time ago wind-bound in the Isle of *Harries*, was prevail'd on by some of them that traded to *Glasgow* to go thither with them. He was astonish'd at the length of the Voyage, and of the great Kingdoms, as he thought 'em, that is Isles, by which they sail'd; the largest in his way did not exceed twenty four Miles in length, but he consider'd how much they exceeded his own little Native Country.

UPON his Arrival at *Glasgow*, he was like one that had dropt from the Clouds into a new World; whose Language, Habit, &c. were in all respects new to him: he never imagin'd that such big Houses of Stone were made with hands; and for the Pavements of the Streets, he thought it must needs be altogether Natural; for he could not believe that Men would be at the pains to beat stones into the ground to walk upon. He stood dumb at the door of his Lodging with the greatest admiration; and when he saw a Coach and two Horses, he thought it to be a little House they were drawing at their Tail, with Men in it; but he condemn'd

condemn'd the Coach-man for a Fool to sit so uneasy, for he thought it safer to sit on the horses back. The Mechanism of the Coach-Wheel, and its running about, was the greatest of all his Wonders.

WHEN he went through the Streets, he desired to have one to lead him by the hand. *Thomas Ross* a Merchant, and others, that took the diversion to carry him through the Town, ask'd his Opinion of the high Church? He answer'd, that it was a large Rock, yet there were some in *St. Kilda* much higher; but that these were the best Caves he ever saw; for that was the Idea which he conceiv'd of the Pillars and Arches upon which the Church stands. When they carried him into the Church, he was yet more surpriz'd, and held up his hands with admiration, wondering how it was possible for Men to build such a prodigious Fabrick, which he suppos'd to be the largest in the Universe. He could not imagine what the Pews were design'd for, and he fancied the People that wore Masks (not knowing whether they were Men or Women) had been guilty of some ill thing, for which they dar'd not shew their Faces. He was amazed at Womens wearing Patches, and fancied them to have been Blisters. Pendants seem'd to him the most ridiculous of all things; he condemn'd Perriwigs mightily, and much more the Powder us'd in them; in fine, he condemn'd all things

298 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

things as superfluous, he saw not in his own Country. He look'd with amazement on every thing that was new to him. When he heard the Church-Bells ring, he was under a mighty Consternation, as if the Fabrick of the World had been in great disorder. He did not think there had been so many People in the World, as in the City of *Glasgow*; and it was a great Mystery to him to think what they could all design by living so many in one place. He wondred how they could all be furnish'd with Provision; and when he saw big Loaves, he could not tell whether they were Bread, Stone, or Wood. He was amaz'd to think how they could be provided with Ale, for he never saw any there that drank Water. He wondred how they made them fine Clothes, and to see Stockings made without being first cut, and afterwards sewn, was no small wonder to him. He thought it foolish in Women to wear thin Silks, as being a very improper habit for such as pretended to any sort of Employment. When he saw the Womens Feet, he judged them to be of another shape than those of the Men, because of the different shape of their Shoes. He did not approve of the heels of Shoes worn by Men or Women; and when he observ'd Horses with shoes on their Feet, and fastned with Iron Nails, he could not forbear laughing, and thought it the most ridiculous thing that ever fell under his Observation. He long'd to see his Native Country again,  
and

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 299

and passionately wish'd it were blessed with Ale, Brandy, Tobacco and Iron, as *Glasgow* was.

THERE's a Couple of large Eagles who have their Nest on the North end of the Isle; the Inhabitants told me that they commonly make their Purchase in the adjacent Isles and Continent, and never take so much as a Lamb or Hen from the Place of their Abode, where they propagate their kind. I forgot to give an account of a singular Providence that happen'd to a Native in the Isle of *Skie*, called *Neil*, who when an Infant was left by his Mother in the Field, not far from the Houses on the North side *Loch-Portrie*; an Eagle came in the mean time, and carried him away in its Talons as far as the South side of the *Loch*, and there laying him on the ground, some People that were herding Sheep there perceiv'd it, and hearing the Infant cry, ran immediately to its rescue; and by good Providence found him untouch'd by the Eagle, and carried him home to his Mother. He is still living in that Parish, and by reason of this Accident, is distinguish'd among his Neighbours by the Surname of *Eagle*.

An

*An Account of the Second-Sight, in Irish call'd Taish.*

**T**HE *Second-Sight* is a singular Faculty of Seeing an otherwise invisible Object, without any previous Means us'd by the Person that sees it for that end; the Vision makes such a lively impresson upon the Seers, that they neither see nor think of any thing else, except the Vision, as long as it continues: and then they appear pensive or jovial, according to the Object which was represented to them.

**A**T the sight of a Vision, the Eye-lids of the Person are erected, and the Eyes continue staring until the Object vanish. This is obvious to others who are by, when the Persons happen to see a Vision, and occur'd more than once to my own Observation, and to others that were with me.

**T**HERE is one in *Skie*, of whom his Acquaintance observed, that when he sees a Vision, the inner part of his Eye-lids turn so far upwards, that after the Object disappears, he must draw them down with his Fingers, and sometimes employs others to draw them down, which he finds to be the much easier way.

**THIS**

**T**HIS Faculty of the *Second-Sight* does not lineally descend in a Family, as some imagine, for I know several Parents who are endowed with it, but their Children not, & *vice versa*: Neither is it acquir'd by any previous Compact: And after a strict Enquiry, I could never learn from any among them, that this Faculty was communicable any way whatsoever.

**T**HE Seer knows neither the Object, Time nor Place of a Vision, before it appears; and the same Object is often seen by different Persons, living at a considerable distance from one another. The true way of judging as to the Time and Circumstance of an Object, is by observation; for several Persons of Judgment, without this Faculty, are more capable to judge of the design of a Vision, than a Novice that is a Seer. If an Object appear in the Day or Night, it will come to pass sooner or later accordingly.

**I**F an Object is seen early in a Morning (which is not frequent) it will be accomplish'd in a few hours afterwards. If at Noon, it will commonly be accomplish'd that very day. If in the Evening, perhaps that Night; if after Candles be lighted, it will be accomplish'd that Night: the latter always in accomplishment, by Weeks, Months, and sometimes Years, according

302 *A DESCRIPTION of the*  
 cording to the time of Night the Vision is  
 seen.

WHEN a Shroud is perceiv'd about one, it  
 is a sure Prognostick of Death: The time is  
 judged according to the height of it about the  
 Person; for if it is not seen above the middle,  
 Death is not to be expected for the space of a  
 year, and perhaps some Months longer; and  
 as it is frequently seen to ascend higher towards  
 the head, Death is concluded to be at hand  
 within a few days, if not hours, as daily expe-  
 rience confirms. Examples of this kind were  
 shewn me, when the Persons of whom the ob-  
 servations then made enjoy'd perfect Health.

ONE Instance was lately foretold by a Seer  
 that was a Novice, concerning the death of one  
 of my Acquaintance; this was communicated  
 to a few only, and with great confidence: I  
 being one of the number, did not in the least  
 regard it, until the death of the Person about  
 the time foretold, did confirm me of the cer-  
 tainty of the Prediction. The Novice men-  
 tion'd above, is now a skilful Seer, as appears  
 from many late instances; he lives in the Parish  
 of *St. Mary's*, the most Northern in *Skie*.

IF a Woman is seen standing at a Man's left  
 hand, it is a presage that she will be his Wife,  
 whether they be married to others, or unmar-  
 ried at the time of the Apparition.

IF

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 303

IF two or three Women are seen at once  
 standing near a Man's left hand, she that is  
 next him will undoubtedly be his Wife first,  
 and so on, whether all three, or the Man be  
 single or married at the time of the Vision or  
 not; of which there are several late Instances  
 among those of my Acquaintance. It is an  
 ordinary thing for them to see a Man that is  
 to come to the House shortly after; and if he  
 is not of the Seer's Acquaintance, yet he gives  
 such a lively description of his Stature, Com-  
 plexion, Habit, &c. that upon his Arrival he  
 answers the Character given him in all re-  
 spects.

IF the Person so appearing be one of the  
 Seer's Acquaintance, he will tell his Name, as  
 well as other Particulars; and he can tell by  
 his Countenance whether he comes in a good  
 or bad humour.

I HAVE been seen thus my self by Seers of  
 both Sexes at some hundred miles distance;  
 some that saw me in this manner, had never  
 seen me personally, and it happened according  
 to their Visions, without any previous design  
 of mine to go to those Places, my coming there  
 being purely accidental.

IT is ordinary with them to see Houses,  
 Gardens and Trees, in Places void of all three;  
 and

## 304 A DESCRIPTION of the

and this in process of time uses to be accomplished: as at *Mogstot* in the Isle of *Skie*, where there were but a few sorry Cow-houses thatched with Straw, yet in a few years after, the Vision which appear'd often was accomplish'd, by the building of several good Houses on the very spot represented to the Seers, and by the planting of Orchards there.

TO see a spark of fire fall upon one's Arm or Breast, is a forerunner of a dead Child to be seen in the arms of those Persons; of which there are several fresh Instances.

TO see a Seat empty at the time of one's sitting in it, is a presage of that Person's death quickly after.

WHEN a Novice, or one that has lately obtain'd the *Second Sight*, sees a Vision in the Night-time without doors, and comes near a fire, he presently falls into a swoon.

SOME find themselves as it were in a croud of People, having a Corps which they carry along with them; and after such Visions the Seers come in sweating, and describe the People that appear'd: if there be any of their Acquaintance among 'em, they give an account of their Names, as also of the Bearers, but they know nothing concerning the Corps.

ALL

## Western Islands of Scotland. 305

ALL those who have the *Second Sight* do not always see these Visions at once, tho' they be together at the time. But if one who has this Faculty, designedly touch his Fellow-Seer at the instant of a Vision's appearing, then the second sees it as well as the first; and this is sometimes discern'd by those that are near them on such occasions.

THERE is a way of foretelling Death by a Cry that they call *Taisk*, which some call a *Wrath* in the Low-land.

THEY hear a loud Cry without doors, exactly resembling the Voice of some particular Person, whose death is foretold by it. The last instance given me of this kind was in the Village *Rigg*, in the Isle of *Skie*.

FIVE Women were sitting together in the same Room, and all of them heard a loud Cry passing by the Window; they thought it plainy to be the Voice of a Maid who was one of the Number: she blushed at the time, tho' not sensible of her so doing, contracted a Fever next day, and died that Week.

THINGS also are foretold by *Smelling*, sometimes as follows. Fish or Flesh is frequently smelted in a Fire, when at the same time neither of the two are in the House, or

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in



306 A DESCRIPTION of the  
 in any probability like to be had in it for some Weeks or Months; for they seldom eat Flesh, and tho' the Sea be near them, yet they catch Fish but seldom, in the Winter and Spring. This *Smell* several Persons have, who are not endued with the *Second Sight*, and it is always accomplish'd soon after.

CHILDREN, Horses and Cows see the *Second Sight*, as well as Men and Women advanced in years.

THAT Children see it, is plain from their crying aloud at the very instant that a Corps or any other Vision appears to an ordinary Seer. I was present in a House where a Child cried out of a sudden, and being ask'd the reason of it, he answer'd that he had seen a great white thing lying on the Board which was in the Corner: but he was not believ'd, until a Seer who was present told them that the Child was in the right; for, said he, I saw a Corps and the Shroud about it, and the Board will be us'd as part of a Coffin, or some way employ'd about a Corps: and accordingly, it was made into a Coffin, for one who was in perfect health at the time of the Vision.

THAT Horses see it, is likewise plain from their violent and sudden starting, when the Rider or Seer in Company with him sees a Vision of any kind, night or day. It is observable

Western Islands of Scotland. 307

fervable of the Horse, that he will not go forward that way, until he be led about at some distance from the common Road, and then he is in a sweat.

A HORSE fastned by the common Road on the side of *Loch-Skerinefs* in *Skie*, did break his Rope at Noon-day, and run up and down without the least visible cause. But two of the Neighbourhood that happen'd to be at a little distance, and in view of the Horse, did at the same time see a considerable number of Men about a Corps, directing their course to the Church of *Snisfort*; and this was accomplish'd within a few days after, by the Death of a Gentlewoman who lived thirteen Miles from that Church, and came from another Parish, from whence very few come to *Snisfort* to be buried.

THAT Cows see the *Second Sight*, appears from this; that when a Woman is milking a Cow, and then happens to see the *Second Sight*, the Cow runs away in a great fright at the same time, and will not be pacified for some time after.

BEFORE I mention more particulars discover'd by the *Second Sight*, it may not be amiss to answer the Objections that have lately been made against the Reality of it.

308 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

*Object.* 1. THESE Seers are visionary and melancholy People, and fancy they see things that do not appear to them, or any body else.

*Answ.* THE People of these Isles, and particularly the Seers, are very temperate, and their Diet is simple, and moderate, in quantity and quality; so that their Brains are not in all probability disordered by undigested Fumes of Meat or Drink. Both Sexes are free from Hysterick Fits, Convulsions, and several other Distempers of that sort; there's no Madmen among them, nor any instance of Self-murder. It is observ'd among 'em, that a Man drunk never sees the *Second Sight*; and he that is a Visionary, would discover himself in other things as well as in that; and such as see it, are not judged to be Visionaries by any of their Friends or Acquaintance.

*Object.* 2. THERE is none among the Learned able to oblige the World with a satisfying account of those Visions, therefore it is not to be believed.

*Answ.* IF every thing for which the Learned are not able to give a satisfying account be condemn'd as impossible, we may find many other things generally believed, that must be rejected as false by this Rule. For instance,  
Yawning,

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 309

Yawning, and its influence, and that the Loadstone attracts Iron; and yet these are true as well as harmless, tho we can give no satisfying account of their Causes. And if we know so little of natural Causes, how much less can we pretend to things that are supernatural?

*Object.* 3. THE Seers are Impostors, and the People who believe them are credulous, and easily imposed upon.

*Answ.* THE Seers are generally illiterate, and well-meaning People, and altogether void of design, nor could I ever learn that any of them made the least gain by it, neither is it reputable among 'em to have that Faculty: besides the People of the Isles are not so credulous as to believe implicitly, before the thing foretold is accomplished; but when it actually comes to pass afterwards, it is not in their power to deny it, without offering violence to their Senses and Reason. Besides, if the Seers were Deceivers, can it be reasonable to imagine, that all the Islanders, who have not the *Second Sight*, should combine together, and offer violence to their Understandings and Senses, to force themselves to believe a Lye from Age to Age. There are several Persons among them, whose Birth and Education raise them above the suspicion of concurring with an Imposture, merely to gratify an illiterate and contemptible sort of Persons; nor can a reasonable Man be-

310 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

lieve that Children, Horses and Cows could be pre-engaged in a Combination to persuade the World of the Reality of the *Second Sight*.

SUCH as deny those Visions, give their assent to several strange Passages in History, upon the Authority aforesaid of Historians that lived several Centuries before our time; and yet they deny the People of this Generation the liberty to believe their intimate Friends and Acquaintance, Men of Probity and unquestionable Reputation, and of whole Veracity they have greater certainty, than we can have of any ancient Historian.

EVERY Vision that is seen comes exactly to pass, according to the true Rules of Observation, tho Novices and heedless Persons do not always judg by those Rules. I remember the Seers return'd me this Answer to my Objection, and gave several Instances to that purpose, whereof the following is one.

A BOY of my Acquaintance was often surpriz'd at the sight of a Coffin close by his Shoulder, which put him into a fright, and made him to believe it was a forerunner of his own Death, and this his Neighbours also judg'd to be the meaning of that Vision; but a Seer that lived in the Village *Knockow*, where the Boy was then a Servant, told them that they were

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 311

were under a great mistake, and desired the Boy to lay hold of the first opportunity that offer'd; and when he went to a Burial, to remember to act as a Bearer for some moments: and this he did accordingly, within a few days after, when one of his Acquaintance died; and from that time forward he was never troubled with seeing a Coffin at his Shoulder, tho he has seen many at a distance, that concerned others. He is now reckon'd one of the exactest Seers in the Parish of *St. Maries* in *Skie*, where he lives.

THERE is another instance of a Woman in *Skie*, who frequently saw a Vision representing a Woman having a Shroud about her up to the middle, but always appear'd with her back towards her, and the Habit in which it seem'd to be dress'd resembled her own: this was a Mystery for some time, until the Woman try'd an Experiment to satisfy her Curiosity, which was, to dress her self contrary to the usual way; that is, she put that part of her Clothes behind, which was always before, fancying that the Vision at the next appearing would be the easier distinguished: and it fell out accordingly, for the Vision soon after presented it self with its Face and Dress looking towards the Woman, and it prov'd to resemble her self in all points, and she died in a little time after.

THERE are Visions seen by several Persons, in whose days they are not accomplished; and this is one of the Reasons, why some things have been seen that are said never to come to pass, and there are also several Visions seen which are not understood until they be accomplished.

THE *Second Sight* is not a late Discovery seen by one or two in a Corner, or a remote Isle, but it is seen by many Persons of both Sexes in several Isles, separated above forty or fifty Leagues from one another: the Inhabitants of many of these Isles, never had the least Converse by Word or Writing; and this faculty of seeing Visions, having continued, as we are informed by Tradition, ever since the Plantation of these Isles, without being disproved by the nicest Sceptick, after the strictest enquiry, seems to be a clear proof of its Reality.

IT is observable, that it was much more common twenty Years ago than at present; for one in ten do not see it now, that saw it then.

THE *Second Sight* is not confined to the Western Isles alone, for I have an account that it is likewise seen in several parts of *Holland*, but particularly in *Bommel*, by a Woman, for which she is courted by some, and dreaded by others. She sees a Smoke about one's Face, which

which is a forerunner of the Death of a Person so seen; and she did actually foretel the death of several that lived there: she was living in that Town this last Winter.

THE Corps-candles, or Dead-mens Lights in *Wales*, which are certain Prognosticks of Death, are well known and attested.

THE *Second Sight* is likewise seen in the Isle of *Man*, as appears by this Instance: Captain *Leaths*, the Chief Magistrate of *Belfast*, in his Voyage 1690, lost thirteen Men by a violent Storm, and upon his landing in the Isle of *Man*, an antient Man, Clerk to a Parish there, told him immediately that he had lost thirteen Men: the Captain enquiring how he came to the knowledg of that, he answered, that it was by thirteen Lights which he had seen come into the Church-yard; as Mr. *Sacheverel* tells us, in his late Description of the Isle of *Man*.

IT were ridiculous to suppose a Combination between the People of the Western Isles of *Scotland*, *Holland*, *Wales*, and the Isle of *Man*, since they are separated by long Seas, and are People of different Languages, Governments, and Interests: They have no Correspondence between them, and it is probable, that those inhabiting the North-West Isles have never yet heard that any such Visions are seen in *Holland*, *Wales*, or the Isle of *Man*.



## 314 A DESCRIPTION of the

FOUR Men of the Village *Flodger* in *Skie* being at Supper, one of them did suddenly let fall his Knife on the Table, and looked with an angry Countenance: the Company observing it, enquired his Reason; but he return'd them no answer until they had supp'd, and then he told them that when he let fall his Knife, he saw a Corps with the Shroud about it laid on the Table, which surpriz'd him, and that a little time would accomplish the Vision. It fell out accordingly, for in a few days after one of the Family died, and happen'd to be laid on that very Table. This was told me by the Master of the Family.

DANIEL STEWART an Inhabitant of *Hole* in the North-Parish of *St. Maries* in the Isle of *Skie*, saw at Noon-day five Men on Horse-back riding Northward; he ran to meet them, and when he came to the Road, he could see none of them, which was very surprizing to him, and he told it his Neighbours: The very next day he saw the same number of Men and Horse coming along the Road, but was not so ready to meet them as before, until he heard them speak, and then he found them to be those that he had seen the day before in a Vision; this was the only Vision of the kind he had ever seen in his Life. The Company he saw was *Sir Donald Mac-Donald* and his Retinue, who at the time

## Western Islands of Scotland. 315

time of the Vision was at *Armidil*, near forty Miles South from the place where the Man lived.

A WOMAN of *Stornbay* in *Lewis* had a Maid who saw Visions, and often fell into a Swoon; her Mistress was very much concern'd about her, but could not find out any means to prevent her seeing those things: at last she resolv'd to pour some of the Water us'd in Baptism on her Maid's Face, believing this would prevent her seeing any more Sight of this kind. And accordingly she carried her Maid with her next Lord's Day, and both of 'em sat near the Basin in which the Water stood, and after Baptism before the Minister had concluded the last Prayer, she put her hand in the Basin, took up as much Water as she could, and threw it on the Maid's Face; at which strange Action the Minister and the Congregation were equally surpriz'd. After Prayer, the Minister enquir'd of the Woman the meaning of such an unbecoming and distracted Action; she told him, it was to prevent her Maid's seeing Visions: and it fell out accordingly, for from that time she never once more saw a Vision of any kind. This account was given me by *Mr. Morison* Minister of the Place, before several of his Parishioners who knew the truth of it. I submit the matter of Fact to the Censure of the Learned; but for my own part, I think it to have been one of Satan's Devices, to make credulous People have an esteem for Holy Water.

JOHN



JOHN MORISON of *Bragir* in *Lewis*, a Person of unquestionable Sincerity and Reputation, told me, that within a Mile of his House a Girl of twelve Years old was troubled at the frequent sight of a Vision, resembling her self in Stature, Complexion, Dress, &c. and seem'd to stand or sit, and to be always employ'd as the Girl was; this prov'd a great trouble to her: her Parents being much concern'd about it, consulted the said *John Morison*, who enquired if the Girl was instructed in the Principles of her Religion, and finding she was not, he bid them teach her the Creed, ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer, and that she should say the latter daily after her Prayers. Mr. *Morison* and his Family join'd in Prayer in the Girl's behalf, begging that God of his goodness would be pleas'd to deliver her from the trouble of such a Vision: after which, and the Girl's complying with the advice as above, she never saw it any more.

A MAN living three Miles to the North of the said *John Morison*, is much haunted by a Spirit, appearing in all points like to himself; and he asks many impertinent Questions of the Man when in the Fields, but speaks not a word to him at home, tho he seldom misses to appear to him every night in the House, but to no other Person. He told this to one of his Neighbours, who advis'd him to cast a live Coal at the

the face of the Vision the next time he appear'd: the Man did so next night, and all the Family saw the Action; but the following day the same Spirit appear'd to him in the Fields, and beat him severely, so as to oblige him to keep his Bed for the space of fourteen days after. Mr. *Morison* Minister of the Parish, and several of his Friends came to see the Man, and join'd in Prayer that he might be freed from this trouble, but he was still haunted by that Spirit a year after I left *Lewis*.

A MAN in *Knockow*, in the Parish of *St. Maries*, the Northermost in *Skie*, being in perfect health, and sitting with his Fellow-Servants at Night, was on a sudden taken ill, dropt from his Seat backward, and then fell a vomiting; at which all the Family were much concern'd, he having never been subject to the like before: but he came to himself soon after, and had no sort of pain about him. One of the Family, who was accustomed to see the *Second Sight*, told them that the Man's Illness proceeded from a very strange Cause, which was thus: An ill-natur'd Woman (naming her by her Name) who lives in the next adjacent Village of *Bornskittag*, came before him in a very furious and angry manner; her Countenance full of Passion, and her Mouth full of Reproaches, and threaten'd him with her Head and Hands, until he fell over as you have seen him. This Woman had a fancy for the Man, but was like to meet with a disappointment as to his marrying her.

This

## 318 A DESCRIPTION of the

This Instance was told me by the Master of the Family, and others who were present when it happen'd.

ONE that liv'd in *St. Maries* on the West side of the Isle of *Skie*, told Mr. *Mack-Pherfon* the Minister, and others, that he saw a Vision of a Corps coming towards the Church, not by the common Road, but by a more rugged Way, which render'd the thing incredible, and occasion'd his Neighbours to call him a Fool; but he bid them have patience, and they would see the Truth of what he asserted in a short time: and it fell out accordingly; for one of the Neighbourhood died, and his Corps was carried along the same unaccustomed Way, the common Road being at that time filled with a deep Snow. This Account was given me by the Minister, and others living there.

Mr. *Mack-Pherfon's* Servant foretold that a Kiln should take fire, and being some time after reprov'd by his Master for talking so foolishly of the *Second Sight*, he answer'd that he could not help his seeing such things as presented themselves to his view in a very lively manner; adding further, I have just now seen that Boy sitting by the Fire with his Face red, as if the Blood had been running down his Forehead, and I could not avoid seeing this: and as for the Accomplishment of it within forty eight hours, there is no doubt, says he, it having appear'd in the day-time. The Minister became very  
angry

## Western Islands of Scotland. 319

angry at his Man, and charg'd him never to speak one word more of the *Second Sight*, or if he could not hold his tongue, to provide himself another Master; telling him he was an unhappy Fellow, who studied to abuse credulous People with false Predictions. There was no more said on this Subject until the next day, that the Boy of whom the Seer spoke, came in, having his Face all cover'd with Blood; which happen'd by his falling on a heap of Stones. This Account was given me by the Minister and others of his Family.

*DANIEL DOW*, alias *Black*, an Inhabitant of *Bornskittag*, was frequently troub'd at the sight of a Man threatening to give him a Blow: he knew no Man resembling this Vision; but the Stature, Complexion and Habit were so impress'd on his Mind, that he said he could distinguish him from any other, if he should happen to see him. About a Year after the Vision appear'd first to him, his Master sent him to *Kyle-Raes*, above thirty Miles further South-East, where he was no sooner arriv'd, than he distinguish'd the Man who had so often appear'd to him at home; and within a few hours after, they happen'd to quarrel, and came to Blows, so as one of them (I forgot which) was wounded in the Head. This was told me by the Seer's Master, and others who live in the place. The Man himself has his Residence there, and is one of the precisest Seers in the Isles.

Sir

Sir *Normand Mack-Leod*, and some others playing at Tables, at a Game call'd in *Irish Falmer-more*, wherein there are three of a side, and each of them throw the Dice by turns; there happen'd to be one difficult Point in the disposing of one of the Table-men: this oblig'd the Gamester to deliberate before he was to change his Man, since upon the disposing of it the winning or losing of the Game depended. At last the Butler, who stood behind, advis'd the Player where to place his Man; with which he comply'd, and won the Game. This being thought extraordinary, and Sir *Normand* hearing one whisper him in the Ear, ask'd who advis'd him so skilfully? He answer'd, it was the Butler; but this seem'd more strange, for he could not play at Tables. Upon this, Sir *Normand* ask'd him how long it was since he had learnt to play? and the Fellow own'd that he never play'd in his life, but that he saw the Spirit *Brownie* reaching his Arm over the Player's Head, and touch'd the Part with his Finger, on the Point where the Table-man was to be plac'd. This was told me by Sir *Normand* and others, who happen'd to be present at the time.

*DANIEL DOW* above-nam'd, foretold the Death of a young Woman in *Minginis*, within less than twenty four hours before the time; and accordingly she died suddenly in the Fields,  
tho

tho at the time of the Prediction she was in perfect Health; but the Shroud appearing close about her Head, was the Ground of his Confidence, that her Death was at hand.

THE same *Daniel Dow* foretold the Death of a Child in his Master's Arms, by seeing a Spark of Fire fall on his left Arm; and this was likewise accomplish'd soon after the Prediction.

SOME of the Inhabitants of *Harries* sailing round the Isle of *Skie*, with a design to go to the opposite main Land, were strangely surpriz'd with an Apparition of two Men hanging down by the Ropes that secur'd the Mast, but could not conjecture what it meant. They pursu'd the Voyage, but the Wind turn'd contrary, and so forc'd them into *Broadford* in the Isle of *Skie*, where they found Sir *Donald Mack-Donald* keeping a Sheriffs Court, and two Criminals receiving Sentence of Death there: the Ropes and Mast of that very Boat were made use of to hang those Criminals. This was told me by several, who had this Instance from the Boat's Crew.

SEVERAL Persons living in a certain Family, told me that they had frequently seen two Men standing at a young Gentlewoman's left Hand, who was their Master's Daughter: they told the Mens Names; and being her Equals, it was not doubted, but she would be  
X married

married to one of them; and perhaps to the other, after the Death of the first. Some time after, a third Man appear'd, and he seem'd always to stand nearest to her of the three, but the Seers did not know him, tho they could describe him exactly. And within some Months after, this Man, who was seen last, did actually come to the House, and fulfill'd the Description given of him by those who never saw him but in a Vision; and he married the Woman shortly after. They live in the Isle of *Skie*; both they and others confirm'd the Truth of this Instance, when I saw them.

*MACK-LEOD's* Porter passing by a Galley that lay in the Dock, saw her fill'd with Men, having a Corps, and near to it he saw several of *Mack-Leod's* Relations: this did in a manner persuade him that his Master was to die soon after, and that he was to be the Corps which was to be transported in the Galley. Some Months after the Vision was seen, *Mack-Leod*, with several of his Relations and others, went to the Isle of *Mull*; where some days after, *Mack Lean* of *Torlosk* happen'd to die, and his Corps was transported in the Galley to his Burial-place, and *Mack-Leod's* Relations were on board to attend the Funeral, while *Mack-Leod* staid ashore, and went along with the Corps after their Landing.

Mr.

Mr. *Dougal Mack-Pherfon*, Minister of *St. Maries* on the West side of *Skie*, having his Servants in the Kiln, drying of Corn, the Kiln happen'd to take fire, but was soon extinguish'd. And within a few Months after, one of the Minister's Servants told him that the Kiln would be on fire again shortly; at which he grew very angry with his Man, threatening to beat him if he should presume to prophesy Mischief, by that lying way of the *Second-sight*. Notwithstanding this, the Man asserted positively, and with great Assurance, that the Kiln would certainly take fire, let them use all the Precautions they could. Upon this, Mr. *Mack-Pherfon* had the Curiosity to enquire of his Man, if he could guess within what space of time the Kiln would take fire? He told him before *Hallowtide*. Upon which, Mr. *Mack-Pherfon* call'd for the Key of the Kiln, and told his Man, that he would take care of the Kiln until the limited Day was expir'd, for none shall enter it sooner; and by this means I shall make the Devil, if he is the Author of such Lyes, and you both Lyars. For this end he kept the Key of the Kiln in his Press, until the time was over, and then deliver'd the Key to the Servants, concluding his Man to be a Fool and a Cheat. Then the Servants went to dry Corn in the Kiln, and were charg'd to have a special Care of the Fire; yet in a little time after the Kiln took Fire, and it was all in a flame,

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accor-



324 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

according to the Prediction, tho the Man mistook the time. He told his Master, that within a few Moments after the Fire of the Kiln had been first extinguish'd, he saw it all in a flame again; and this appearing to him in the day time, it would come to pass the sooner.

*JOHN Mack-Normand*, and *Daniel Mack-Ewin*, travelling along the Road, two Miles to the North of *Snisfort* Church, saw a Body of Men coming from the North, as if they had a Corps with 'em to be buried in *Snisfort*: this determin'd them to advance towards the River, which was then a little before them, and having waited at the Ford, thinking to meet those that they expected with the Funeral, were altogether disappointed; for after taking a view of the Ground all round them, they discover'd that it was only a Vision. This was very surprizing to them both, for they never saw any thing by way of the *Second-sight* before or after that time. This they told their Neighbours when they came home, and it happen'd that about two or three Weeks after a Corps came along that Road from another Parish, from which few or none are brought to *Snisfort*, except Persons of Distinction; so that this Vision was exactly accomplished.

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*Western Islands of Scotland.* 325

A GENTLEMAN who is a Native of *Skie*, did, when a Boy, disoblige a Seer in the Isle of *Rafay*, and upbraid him for his Uglinefs, as being black by Name and Nature. At last the Seer told him very angrily, My Child, if I am black, you'll be red e'er long. The Master of the Family chid him for this, and bid him give over his foolish Predictions; since no body believ'd them; but next Morning the Boy being at play near the Houses, fell on a Stone, and wounded himself in the Forehead, so deep, that to this day there's a hallow Scar in that Part of it.

*JAMES BEATON*, Surgeon in the Isle of *North-Vist*, told me, that being in the Isle of *Mull*, a Seer told him confidently, that he was shortly to have a bloody Forehead; but he disregarded it, and call'd the Seer a Fool. However, this *James* being call'd by some of the *Mackleans* to go along with them to attack a Vessel belonging to the Earl of *Argyle*, who was then coming to possess *Mull* by force; they attack'd the Vessel, and one of the *Mack-Leans* being wounded, the said *James* while dressing the Wound, happen'd to rub his Forehead, and then some of his Patient's Blood stuck to his Face, which accomplish'd the Vision.

MY Lord Viscount *Tarbat*, one of her Majesty's Secretaries of State in *Scotland*, travelling in the Shire of *Rofs*, in the North of *Scotland* came,

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326 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

came into a House, and sat down in an arm'd Chair: one of his Retinue who had the Faculty of seeing the *Second-sight*, spoke to some of my Lord's Company, desiring them to persuade him to leave the House; for, said he, there is a great Misfortune will attend somebody in it, and that within a few Hours. This was told my Lord, but he did not regard it: The Seer did soon after renew his Intreaty, with much Eagerness, begging that my Lord might remove out of that unhappy Chair, but had no other answer than to be expos'd for a Fool. Some Hours after my Lord remov'd, and pursu'd his Journey; but was not gone many Hours when a Trooper riding upon the Ice, near the House whence my Lord remov'd, fell and broke his Thigh, and being afterwards brought into that House, was laid in the armed Chair, where his Wound was dress'd, which accomplished the Vision. I heard this Instance from several Hands, and had it since confirm'd by my Lord himself.

A MAN in the Parish of *St. Maries*, in the Barony of *Troterness* in *Skie*, called *Lachlin*, lay sick for the space of some Months, decaying daily, insomuch that all his Relations and Acquaintance despair'd of his Recovery. One of the Parishioners, called *Archibald Mack-Donald*, being reputed famous for his Skill in foretelling things to come, by the *Second-sight*, asserted positively that the sick Man would never die  
in

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 327

in the House where he then lay. This being thought very improbable, all the Neighbours condemn'd *Archibald* as a foolish Prophet: upon which, he passionately affirm'd, that if ever that sick Man dies in the House where he now lies, I shall from henceforth renounce my Part of Heaven; adding withal, the Sick Man was to be carried alive out of the House in which he then lay, but that he would never return to it alive: and then he nam'd the Persons that should carry out the Sick Man alive. The Man having liv'd some Weeks longer than his Friends imagin'd, and proving uneasy and troublesome to all the Family; they considered that *Archibald* had reason for his peremptory Assertion, and therefore they resolv'd to carry him to a House joining to that in which he then lay: but the Poor Man would by no means give his consent to be mov'd from a Place where he believ'd he should never die; so much did he rely on the Words of *Archibald*, of whose Skill he had seen many Demonstrations. But at last his Friends being fatigu'd day and night with the Sick Man's Uneasiness, they carried him against his Inclination to another little House, which was only separated by an Entry from that in which he lay, and their Feet were scarce within the Threshold, when the Sick Man gave up the Ghost; and it was remarkable that the two Neighbours, which *Archibald* named would carry him out, were actually the Persons that did so. At the time of the Prediction, *Archibald*

## 328 A DESCRIPTION of the

*bald* saw him carried out as above, and when he was within the Door of the other House, he saw him all white, and the Shroud being about him, occasion'd his confidence as above mention'd. This is Matter of Fact, which Mr. *Daniel Nicholson* Minister of the Parish, and a considerable Number of the Parishioners, are able to vouch for, and ready to attest, if occasion requires.

THE same *Archibald Mack-Donald* happen'd to be in the Village *Knockow* one night, and before Supper told the Family, that he had just then seen the strangest thing he ever saw in his Life; to wit, a Man with an ugly long Cap, always shaking his Head: but that the strangest of all, was a little kind of a Harp which he had, with four Strings only, and that it had two Harts-Horns fixed in the Front of it. All that heard this odd Vision, fell a laughing at *Archibald*, telling him that he was dreaming, or had not his Wits about him; since he pretended to see a thing that had no being, and was not so much as heard of in any Part of the World. All this could not alter *Archibald's* Opinion, who told them that they must excuse him, if he laugh'd at them after the Accomplishment of the Vision. *Archibald* return'd to his own House, and within three or four days after, a Man with the Cap, Harp, &c. came to the House, and the Harp, Strings, Horns, and Cap answer'd the Description of them at first view: he shook his

## Western Islands of Scotland. 329

his Head when he play'd, for he had two Bells fixed to his Cap. This Harper was a poor Man, and made himself a Buffoon for his Bread, and was never before seen in those Parts; for at the time of the Prediction, he was in the Isle of *Burray*, which is above twenty Leagues distant from that Part of *Skie*. This Story is vouched by Mr. *Daniel Martin*, and all his Family, and such as were then present, and live in the Village where this happen'd.

Mr. *Daniel Nicholson* Minister of *St. Maries* in *Skie*, the Parish in which *Archibald Mack-Donald* liv'd, told me, that one Sunday after Sermon at the Chappel *Uge*, he took occasion to enquire of *Archibald*, if he still retain'd that unhappy Faculty of seeing the *Second-sight*, and he wish'd him to lay it aside, if possible; for, said he, it is no true Character of a good Man. *Archibald* was highly displeas'd, and answer'd, That he hop'd he was no more unhappy than his Neighbours, for seeing what they could not perceive; adding, I had, says he, as serious Thoughts as my Neighbours, in time of hearing a Sermon to-day, and even then I saw a Corps laid on the Ground close to the Pulpit, and I assure you it will be accomplish'd shortly, for it was in the day-time. Mr. *Nicholson* and several Parishioners then present, endeavour'd to dissuade *Archibald* from this Discourse; but he still asserted that it would quickly come to pass, and that all his other Predictions of this kind had ever been accomplish'd.

There

## 330 A DESCRIPTION of the

There was none in the Parish then sick, and few are buried at that little Chappel, nay sometimes not one in a Year is buried there; yet when Mr. *Nicholson* return'd to preach in the said Chappel, two or three Weeks after, he found one buried in the very spot nam'd by *Archibald*. This Story is vouch'd by Mr. *Nicholson*, and several of the Parishioners still living.

Mr. *Daniel Nicholson* above mention'd, being a Widower at the Age of 44, this *Archibald* saw in a Vision a young Gentlewoman in a good Dress frequently standing at Mr. *Nicholson's* right Hand, and this he often told the Parishioners positively; and gave an account of her Complexion, Stature, Habit, and that she would in time be Mr. *Nicholson's* Wife: this being told the Minister by several of 'em, he desired them to have no regard to what that foolish Dreamer had said; for, said he, it is twenty to one if ever I marry again. *Archibald* happen'd to see Mr. *Nicholson* soon after this slighting Expression, however he persisted still in his Opinion, and said confidently that Mr. *Nicholson* would certainly marry, and that the Woman would in all Points make up the Character he gave of her, for he saw her as often as he saw Mr. *Nicholson*. This Story was told me above a Year before the Accomplishment of it; and Mr. *Nicholson*, some two or three Years after *Archibald's* Prediction, went to a Synod in *Boat*, where he had the first Opportunity of seeing one

## Western Islands of Scotland. 331

one Mrs. *Morison*, and from that moment fancied her, and afterwards married her. She was no sooner seen in the Isle of *Skie*, than the Natives, who had never seen her before, were satisfy'd that she did compleatly answer the Character given of her, &c. by *Archibald*.

ONE who had been accustomed to see the *Second-sight*, in the Isle of *Egg*, which lies about three or four Leagues to the South-West Part of the Isle of *Skie*, told his Neighbours that he had frequently seen an Apparition of a Man in a red Coat lin'd with blue, and having on his Head a strange sort of blue Cap, with a very high Cock on the fore-part of it, and that the Man who there appear'd, was kissing a comely Maid in the Village where the Seer dwelt; and therefore declar'd that a Man in such a Dress would certainly debauch or marry such a Young Woman. This unusual Vision did much expose the Seer, for all the Inhabitants treated him as a Fool, tho he had on several other occasions foretold things that afterwards were accomplished; this they thought one of the most unlikely things to be accomplished, that could have entered into any Man's Head. This Story was then discours'd of in the Isle of *Skie*, and all that heard it, laugh'd at it; it being a Rarity to see any Foreigner in *Egg*, and the Young Woman had no thoughts of going any where else. This Story was told me at *Edinburgh*, by *Normand Mack-Leod* of *Graban*, in September 1688.

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332 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

he being just then come from the Isle of *Skie*; and there were present, the Laird of *Mack-Leod*, and Mr. *Alexander Mack-Leod* Advocate, and others.

ABOUT a Year and a half after the late Revolution, Major *Ferguson*, now Colonel of one of her Majesty's Regiments of Foot, was then sent by the Government with six hundred Men, and some Frigots to reduce the Islanders that had appear'd for K. J. and perhaps the small Isle of *Egg* had never been regarded, tho' some of the Inhabitants had been at the Battle of *Kelcrankey*, but by a mere Accident, which determin'd Major *Ferguson* to go the Isle of *Egg*, which was this: A Boat's Crew of the Isle of *Egg*, happen'd to be in the Isle of *Skie*, and kill'd one of Major *Ferguson*'s Soldiers there; upon notice of which, the Major directed his Course to the Isle of *Egg*, where he was sufficiently reveng'd of the Natives: and at the same time, the Maid above mention'd being very handsom, was then forcibly carried on board one of the Vessels, by some of the Soldiers, where she was kept above twenty four Hours, and ravish'd, and brutishly robb'd at the same time of her fine Head of Hair: She is since married in the Isle, and in good Reputation; her Misfortune being pitied, and not reckon'd her Crime.

Sir *Normand Mack-Leod*, who has his Residence in the Isle of *Bernera*, which lies between

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 333

tween the Isle of *North-Vist* and *Harries*, went to the Isle of *Skie* about Business, without appointing any time for his return: his Servants in his absence, being all together in the large Hall at Night, one of them who had been accustomed to see the *Second-Sight*, told the rest they must remove, for they would have abundance of other Company in the Hall that night. One of his Fellow-Servants answer'd, that there was very little Appearance of that, and if he had seen any Vision of Company, it was not like to be accomplish'd this Night: But the Seer insisted upon it, that it was. They continu'd to argue the Improbability of it, because of the Darkness of the Night, and the Danger of coming thro' the Rocks that lie round the Isle: but within an Hour after, one of Sir *Normand*'s Men came to the House, bidding them provide Lights, &c. for his Master had newly landed; and thus the Prediction was immediately accomplished.

Sir *Normand* hearing of it, call'd for the Seer, and examin'd him about it; he answer'd, that he had seen the Spirit call'd *Browny*, in human Shape, come several times, and make a shew of carrying an old Woman that sat by the Fire to the Door; and at last seem'd to carry her out by neck and heels, which made him laugh heartily, and gave occasion to the rest to conclude he was mad, to laugh so without reason. This Instance was told me by Sir *Normand* himself.

FOUR

FOUR Men from the Isle of *Skie* and *Harries* having gone to *Barbadoes*, stay'd there for fourteen Years; and tho they were wont to see the *Second-sight* in their Native Country, they never saw it in *Barbadoes*: but upon their return to *England*, the first Night after their landing they saw the *Second-sight*, as was told me by several of their Acquaintance.

JOHN MORISON, who lives in *Berner a* of *Harries*, wears the Plant call'd *Fuga Demonum* sew'd in the Neck of his Coat, to prevent his seeing of Visions, and says he never saw any since he first carried that Plant about him. He suffer'd me to feel the Plant in the Neck of his Coat, but would by no means let me open the Seam, tho I offer'd him a Reward to let me do it.

A SPIRIT, by the Country People call'd *Brownie*, was frequently seen in all the most considerable Families in the Isles and North of *Scotland*, in the shape of a tall Man; but within these twenty or thirty Years past, he is seen but rarely.

THERE were Spirits also that appear'd in the shape of Women, Horses, Swine, Cats, and some like fiery Balls, which would follow Men in the Fields; but there has been but few Instances of these for forty Years past.

THESE

THESE Spirits us'd also to form Sounds in the Air, resembling those of a Harp, Pipe, Crowing of a Cock, and of the grinding of Querns: and sometimes they have heard Voices in the Air by Night, singing *Irish* Songs; the Words of which Songs some of my Acquaintance still retain. One of 'em resembled the Voice of a Woman who had died some time before, and the Song related to her State in the other World. These Accounts I had from Persons of as great Integrity as any are in the World.

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*A Brief Account of the Advantages the Isles afford by Sea and Land, and particularly for a Fishing Trade.*

THE North-West Isles are of all other most capable of Improvement by Sea and Land; yet by reason of their Distance from Trading Towns, and because of their Language, which is *Irish*, the Inhabitants have never had any opportunity to trade at home or abroad, or to acquire Mechanical Arts, and other Sciences: so that they are still left to act by the force of their natural Genius, and what they could learn by observation. They have not yet arriv'd to a competent Knowledg in Agriculture, for which cause many Tracts of rich Ground lie neglected, or at least but meanly improv'd, in proportion to what they might be. This is the more to be regretted, because the People are as capable to acquire Arts or Sciences, as any other in *Europe*. If two or more Persons skill'd in Agriculture were sent from the Low-lands, to each Parish in the Isles, they would soon enable the Natives to furnish themselves with such Plenty of Corn, as would maintain all their poor and idle People; many of which, for want of Subsistence at home, are forc'd to seek their Livelihood in foreign Countries, to the great Loss, as well as Dishonour,

nour of the Nation. This would enable them also to furnish the opposite barren Parts of the Continent with Bread; and so much the more, that in plentiful Years they afford them good Quantities of Corn in this infant State of their Agriculture. They have many large Parcels of Ground never yet manur'd, which if cultivated, would maintain double the Number of the present Inhabitants, and increase and preserve their Cattle; many of which, for want of Hay or Straw, die in the Winter and Spring: so that I have known particular Persons lose above one hundred Cows at a time, meerly by want of Fodder.

THIS is so much the more inexcusable, because the Ground in the Western Isles is naturally richer in many respects than in many other Parts of the Continent; as appears from several Instances, particularly in *Skie*, and the opposite Western Isles, in which there are many Valleys, &c. capable of good Improvement, and of which divers Experiments have been already made; and besides, most of those Places have the Convenience of Fresh-water Lakes and Rivers, as well as of the Sea, near at hand, to furnish the Inhabitants with Fish of many sorts, and *Alga Marina* for manuring the Ground.

IN many Places the Soil is proper for Wheat; and that their Grass is good, is evident from the great Product of their Cattle: so that if

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338 A DESCRIPTION of the  
the Natives were taught and encouraged to take pains to improve their Corn and Hay, to plant, inclose and manure their Ground, drain Lakes, sow Wheat and Pease, and plant Orchards, and Kitchin-Gardens, &c. they might have as great Plenty of all things for the Suttenance of Mankind, as any other People in Europe.

I HAVE known a hundred Families, of four or five Persons apiece at least, maintain'd there upon little Farms, for which they paid not above five Shillings *Sterl.* one Sheep, and some Pecks of Corn *per Ann.* each; which is enough to shew, that by a better Improvement, that Country would maintain many more Inhabitants than live now in the Isles.

IF any Man be dispos'd to live a solitary retir'd Life, and to withdraw from the Noise of the World, he may have a Place of Retreat there in a small Island, or in the Corner of a large one, where he may enjoy himself, and live at a very cheap rate.

IF any Family, reduc'd to low Circumstances, had a mind to retire to any of these Isles, there is no Part of the known World, where they may have the Products of Sea and Land cheaper, live more securely, or among a more tractable and mild People. And that the Country in  
general

Western Islands of Scotland. 339  
general is healthful, appears from the good State of Health enjoy'd by the Inhabitants.

I SHALL not offer to assert that there are Mines of Gold or Silver in the Western Isles, from any resemblance they may bear to other Parts that afford Mines, but the Natives affirm that Gold Dust has been found at *Griminis* on the Western Coast of the Isle of *North-Vist*, and at *Copveaul* in *Harries*; in which, as well as in other Parts of the Isles, the Teeth of the Sheep which feed there are dyed yellow.

THERE is a good Lead Mine, having a Mixture of Silver in it, on the West end of the Isle of *Ila*, near Port *Escock*; and *Buchanan* and others say, that the Isle *Lismore* affords Lead: and *Slait* and *Strath*, on the South-West of *Skie*, are in Stone, Ground, Grasse, &c. exactly the same with that Part of *Ila*, where there's a Lead Mine. And if search were made in the Isles and Hills of the opposite Main, it is not improbable that some good Mines might be discover'd in some of them.

I WAS told by a Gentleman of *Lochaber*, that an *English*-Man had found some Gold-Dust in a Mountain near the River *Lochy*, but could never find out the Place again after his return from *England*. That there have been Gold Mines in *Scotland*, is clear, from the Ma-  
nuscripts

340 *A DESCRIPTION of the*  
 nuscripts mention'd by Dr. *Nicholson*, now Bishop  
 of *Carlisle*, in his late *Scots Hist. Library*.

THE Situation of these Isles for promoting  
 Trade in general, appears advantageous enough ;  
 but more particularly for a Trade with *Den-*  
*mark, Sweden, Hamburg, Holland, Britain, and*  
*Ireland. France and Spain* seem remote, yet  
 they don't exceed a Week's Sailing, with a fa-  
 vourable Wind.

THE General Opinion of the Advantage  
 that might be reap'd from the Improvement of  
 the Fish Trade in these Isles, prevail'd among  
 considering People in former times to attempt  
 it.

THE first that I know of, was by King  
*Charles the First*, in conjunction with a Com-  
 pany of Merchants ; but it miscarried because  
 of the Civil Wars, which unhappily broke out  
 at that time.

THE next Attempt was by King *Charles*  
*the Second*, who also join'd with some Mer-  
 chants ; and this succeeded well for a time. I  
 am assured by such as saw the Fish catch'd  
 by that Company, that they were reputed the  
 best in *Europe* of their kind, and accordingly,  
 were sold for a greater Price ; but this Design  
 was ruin'd thus : The King having occasion  
 for Money, was advis'd to withdraw that  
 which

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 341

which was employ'd in the Fishery ; at which  
 the Merchants being displeas'd, and disagreeing  
 likewise among themselves, they also withdrew  
 their Money : and the Attempt has never been  
 renew'd since that time.

THE settling a Fishery in those Parts would  
 prove of great advantage to the Government,  
 and be an effectual Means to advance the Re-  
 venue, by the Customs on Export and Im-  
 port, &c.

IT would also be a Nursery of stout and  
 able Seamen in a very short time, to serve the  
 Government on all Occasions. The Inhabi-  
 tants of the Isles and opposite Main-Land being  
 very prolific already, the Country would be-  
 yond all peradventure become very populous in  
 a little time, if a Fishery were once settled  
 among them. The Inhabitants are not con-  
 temptible for their number at present, nor  
 are they to learn the use of the Oar, for all of  
 them are generally very dextrous at it : so  
 that those Places need not to be planted with  
 a new Colony, but only furnish'd with pro-  
 per Materials, and a few expert Hands, to join  
 with the Natives to set on foot and advance a  
 Fishery.

THE People inhabiting the Western Isles of  
*Scotland*, may be about forty thousand, and  
 many of 'em want Emyloyment ; this is a great  
 Encou-

342 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

Encouragement, both for setting up other Manufactories, and the fishing Trade among 'em: Besides a great number of People may be expected from the opposite Continent of the Highlands, and North; which from a late Computation, by one who had an Estimate of their Number, from several Ministers in the Country, are reckon'd to exceed the Number of *Islanders* above ten to one: and 'tis too well known, that many of 'em also want Employment. The Objection, that they speak only *Irish*, is nothing: many of 'em understand *English*, in all the considerable Islands, which are sufficient to direct the rest in catching and curing Fish; and in a little time the Youth would learn *English*.

THE Commodiousness and Safety of the numerous Bays and Harbours in those Isles, seem as if Nature had design'd them for promoting Trade: they are likewise furnish'd with Plenty of good Water, and Stones for building. The opposite Main Land affords Wood of divers sorts for that use. They have Abundance of Turff and Peat for Fuel; and of this latter, there is such Plenty in many Parts, as might furnish Salt-Pans with Fire all the Year round. The Sea forces its Passage in several small Channels through the Land; so as it renders the Design more easy and practicable.

THE Coast of each Isle affords many thousand Load of Sea ware, which if preserv'd, might  
be

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 343

be successfully us'd for making Glafs, and likewise *Kelp* for Soap.

THE generality of the Bays afford all sorts of Shell-fish in great plenty; as Oysters, Clams, Muscles, Lobsters, Cockles, &c. which might be pickled, and exported in great quantities. There are great and small Whales of divers kinds to be had round the Isles, and on the Shore of the opposite Continent; and are frequently seen in narrow Bays, where they may be easily caught. The great Number of Rivers, both in the Isles and opposite main Land, afford abundance of Salmon, which, if rightly manag'd, might turn to a good account.

THE Isles afford likewise great quantities of black Cattle, which might serve the Traders both for Consumption and Export.

STRATH in *Skie* abounds with good Marble, which may be had at an easy rate, and near the Sea.

THERE is good Wool in most of the Isles, and very cheap; some are at the charge of carrying it on Horse-back, about seventy or eighty Miles, to the Shires of *Murray* and *Aberdeen*.

THERE are several of the Isles, that afford a great deal of very fine Clay; which, if improv'd,

344 *A DESCRIPTION of the*  
might turn to a good account for making Earthen Ware of all sorts.

THE most central and convenient Places for keeping Magazines of Cask, Salt, &c. are those mention'd in the respective Isles; as one at *Loch-Maddy* Isles, in the Isle of *North-Vist*; a second in the Isle *Hermetra*, on the Coast of the Isle *Harries*; a third in Island *Glass*, on the Coast of *Harries*; and a fourth in *Stornvay*, in the Isle of *Lewis*.

BUT for settling a Magazine or Colony for Trade in general, and Fishing in particular, the Isle of *Skie* is absolutely the most central, both with regard to the Isles and opposite main Land; and the most proper Places in this Isle, are Island *Isa* in *Lochfallart*, and *Lochuge*, both on the West-side of *Skie*; *Loch-Portrie*, and *Scow-sar* on the East-side; and Island *Dierman* on the South-side: these Places abound with all sorts of Fish that are caught in those Seas; and they are proper Places for a considerable Number of Men to dwell in, and convenient for settling Magazines in 'em.

THERE are many Bays and Harbours that are convenient for building Towns in several of the other Isles, if Trade were settled among them; and Cod and Ling, as well as Fish of lesser size, are to be had generally on the Coast of the lesser, as well as of the larger Isles. I  
am

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 345

am not ignorant that Foreigners, sailing thro the Western Isles, have been tempted, from the sight of so many wild Hills, that seem to be cover'd all over with Heath, and fac'd with high Rocks, to imagine that the Inhabitants, as well as the Places of their Residence, are barbarous; and to this Opinion, their Habit, as well as their Language, have contributed. The like is suppos'd by many that live in the South of *Scotland*, who know no more of the Western Isles than the Natives of *Italy*: but the Lion is not so fierce as he is painted, neither are the People describ'd here so barbarous as the World imagines: It is not the Habit that makes the Monk, nor doth the Garb in fashion qualify him that wears it to be virtuous. The Inhabitants have Humanity, and use Strangers hospitably and charitably. I could bring several Instances of Barbarity and Theft committed by Stranger Seamen in the Isles, but there is not one Instance of any Injury offer'd by the *Islanders* to any Seamen or Strangers. I had a particular Account of Seamen, who not many Years ago stole Cattle and Sheep in several of the Isles; and when they were found on board their Vessels, the Inhabitants were satisfy'd to take their Value in Money or Goods, without any further Resentment: tho many Seamen, whose Lives were preserv'd by the Natives, have made 'em very ungrateful Returns. For the Humanity and hospitable Temper of the *Islanders* to Sailors, I shall only give two Instances:



## 346 A DESCRIPTION of the

stances: Captain *Jackson* of *White-Haven*, about sixteen Years ago, was oblig'd to leave his Ship, being leaky, in the Bay within Island *Glass*, alias *Scalpa*, in the Isle of *Harries*, with two Men to take care of her, tho' loaded with Goods: the Ship was not within three Miles of a House, and separated from the Dwelling-places by Mountains; yet when the Captain return'd, about ten or twelve Months after, he found his Men and the Vessel safe.

CAPTAIN *Lotch* lost the *Dromedary* of *London*, of six hundred Tun Burden, with all her rich Cargo from the *Indies*; of which he might have sav'd a great deal, had he embrac'd the Assistance which the Natives offer'd him to unlade her: but the Captain's Shyness, and fear of being thought rude, hinder'd a Gentleman on the Place to employ about seventy Hands, which he had ready to unlade her; and so the Cargo was lost. The Captain and his Men were kindly entertain'd there by Sir *Normand Mack-Leod*; and tho', among other valuable Goods, they had six Boxes of Gold Dust, there was not the least thing taken from them by the Inhabitants. There are some Pedlars from the Shire of *Murray*, and other Parts, who of late have fix'd their Residence in the Isle of *Skie*, and travel thro' the remotest Isles without any Molestation; tho' some of those Pedlars speak no *Irish*. Several Barks come yearly from *Orkney* to the Western Isles, to fish for Cod and Ling;  
and

## Western Islands of Scotland. 347

and many from *Anstruther* in the Shire of *Fife*, came formerly to *Burray* and other Isles to fish, before the Battle of *Kilsyth*; where most of them being cut off, that Trade was afterwards neglected.

THE Magazines and Fishing-Boats, left by Foreigners in the Isles above mention'd, were reckon'd secure enough, when one of the Natives only was left in charge with them till the next Season; and so they might be still. So that if a Company of Strangers from any part should settle to fish or trade in these Isles, there is no Place of greater Security in any part of *Europe*; for the Proprietors are always ready to assist and support all Strangers within their respective Jurisdictions. A few *Dutch* Families settled in *Stornway*, in the Isle of *Lewis*, after King *Charles* the Second's Restoration, but some cunning Merchants found means by the Secretaries to prevail with the King to send them away, tho' they brought the *Islanders* a great deal of Money for the Products of their Sea and Land-Fowl, and taught them something of the Art of Fishing. Had they stay'd, the *Islanders* must certainly have made considerable Progress in Trade by this time; for the small Idea of Fishing they had from the *Dutch* has had so much effect, as to make the People of the little Village of *Stornway* to excel all those of the neighbouring Isles and Continent in the Fishing Trade ever since that time.

FOR

FOR the better Government of those Isles, in case of setting up a Fishing Trade there, it may perhaps be found necessary to erect the Isles of *Skie, Lewis, Harries, South* and *North-Vist, &c.* into a Sherivalty, and to build a Royal Borough in *Skie* as the Center, because of the Peoples great distance in remote Isles, from the head Borough of the Shire of *Inverness*. This would seem much more necessary here than those of *Boat* and *Arran*, that lie much nearer to *Dunbarton*, tho they be necessary enough in themselves.

IT may likewise deserve the Consideration of the Government, whether they should not make the Isle of *Skie* a free Port, because of the great Encouragement such Immunities give to Trade; which always issues in the Welfare of the Publick, and adds Strength and Reputation to the Government. Since these Isles are capable of the Improvements above-mention'd, it is a great loss to the Nation they should be thus neglected. This is the general Opinion of Foreigners, as well as of our own Countrymen, who know them; but I leave the further Enquiry to such as shall be dispos'd to attempt a Trade there, with the Concurrence of the Government. *Scotland* has Men and Money enough to set up a Fishery; so that there seems to be nothing wanting towards it, but the

the Encouragement of those in Power, to excite the Inclination and Industry of the People.

IF the *Dutch* in their Publick Edicts call their Fishery a Golden Mine, and at the same time affirm that it yields them more Profit than the *Indies* do to *Spain*; we have very great reason to begin to work upon those rich Mines, not only in the Isles, but on all our Coast in general. We have Multitudes of Hands to be employ'd at a very easy rate; we have a healthful Climate, and our Fish, especially the Herring, come to our Coast in *April* or *May*, and into the Bays in prodigious Shoals in *July* or *August*. I have seen Complaints from *Loch-Effort* in *Skie*, that all the Ships there were loaded, and that the Barrel of Herring might be had there for four Pence, but there were no Buyers.

I HAVE known the Herring-Fishing to continue in some Bays from *September* till the end of *January*; and wherever they are, all other Fish follow 'em, and Whales and Seals in particular: for the larger Fish of all kinds feed upon Herring.

*A brief Description of the Isles of Orkney and Schetland, &c.*

THE Isles of *Orkney* lie to the North of *Scotland*, having the main *Calidonian Ocean*, which contains the *Hebrides* on the West, and the *German Ocean* on the East; and the Sea towards the North separates 'em from the Isles of *Schetland*. *Pictland Firth* on the South, which is twelve Miles broad, reaches to *Dungisbie-Head*, the most Northern Point of the main Land of *Scotland*.

AUTHORS differ as to the Origin of the Name; the *English* call it *Orkney*, from *Erick*, one of the first *Pictish* Princes that possess'd 'em: and it is observ'd, that *Pict* or *Pight* in the *Teutonick* Language signifies a Fighter. The *Irish* call them *Arkive*, from the first Planter; and *Latin* Authors call them *Orcades*. They lie in the Northern temperate Zone, and 13th Climate; the Longitude is between 22 Degrees, and 11 Minutes, and Latitude 59 Degrees, 2 Minutes: the Compass varies here 8 Degrees; the longest Day is about 18 Hours. The Air is temperately cold, and the Night so clear, that in the middle of *June* one may see to read all Night long; and the Days in Winter are by consequence very short. Their Winters here are commonly more subject to Rain than Snow,  
for

for the Sea-Air dissolves the latter. The Winds are often very boistrous in this Country.

THE Sea ebbs and flows here as in other Parts, except in a few Sounds, and about some Promontories; which alter the Course of the Tides, and make 'em very impetuous.

THE Isles of *Orkney* are reckon'd twenty six in Number; the lesser Isles, call'd *Holms*, are not inhabited, but fit for Pasturage: most of their Names end in *a* or *ey*, that in the *Teutonick* Language signifies Water, with which they are all surrounded.

THE main Land, call'd by the Antients *Pomona*, is about twenty four Miles long, and in the middle of it, on the South-side, lies the only Town in *Orkney*, call'd *Kirkwall*, which is about three quarters of a Mile in length; the *Danes* call'd it *Cracoviaca*. There has been two fine Edifices in it, one of 'em call'd the King's Palace, which is suppos'd to have been built by one of the Bishops of *Orkney*, because in the Wall there's a Bishop's Miter and Arms engraven, and the Bishops antiently had their Residence in it.

THE Palace now call'd the Bishop's, was built by *Patrick Stewart*, Earl of *Orkney*, Anno 1606.

THERE

THERE is a stately Church in this Town, having a Steeple erected on four large Pillars in the middle of it; there are fourteen Pillars on each side the Church: it is call'd by the Name of *St. Magnus's Church*, being founded, as the Inhabitants say, by *Magnus King of Norway*, whom they believe to be interr'd there. The Seat of Justice for these Isles is kept here; the Steward, Sheriff, and Commissary, do each of them keep their respective Courts in this Place. It hath a Publick School for teaching of Grammar Learning, endow'd with a competent Salary.

THIS Town was erected into a Royal Borough when the *Danes* possess'd it, and their Charter was afterwards confirm'd to them by King *James the Third*, Anno 1486. They have from that Charter a Power to hold Borough-Courts, to imprison, to arrest, to make By-Laws, to chuse their own Magistrates yearly, to have two weekly Markets; and they have also Power of Life and Death, and of sending Commissioners to Parliament, and all other Privileges granted to Royal Boroughs. This Charter was dated at *Edinburgh* the last Day of *March*, 1486. and it was since ratify'd by King *James the Fifth*, and King *Charles the Second*. The Town is govern'd by a Provost, four Bailiffs, and a Common-Council.

ON

ON the West end of the Main is the King's Palace formerly mention'd, built by *Robert Stewart Earl of Orkney*, about the Year 1574. Several Rooms in it have been curiously painted with Scripture-Stories, as the Flood of *Noah*, *Christ's riding to Jerusalem*, &c. and each Figure has the Scripture by it, that it refers to. Above the Arms within there is this lofty Inscription, *Sic fuit, est, & erit*. This Island is fruitful in Corn and Grass, and has several good Harbours; one of them at *Kirk-Wall*, a second at the Bay of *Kerston Village*, near the West End of the Isle, well secur'd against Wind and Weather; the third is at *Deer-Sound*, and reckon'd a very good Harbour; the fourth is at *Grahamshall*, towards the East side of the Isle, but in sailing to it from the East side, Seamen would do well to sail betwixt *Lambholm* and the Main Land, and not between *Lambholm* and *Burray*, which is shallow.

ON the East of the Main Land lies the small Isle *Copinsha*, fruitful in Corn and Grass; it is distinguish'd by Sea-faring Men for its Conspicuousness at a great distance. To the North End of it lies the *Holm*, called the Horse of *Copinsha*. Over against *Kerston Bay* lie the Isles of *Hoy* and *Waes*, which make but one Isle, about twelve Miles in length, and mountainous.

354 A DESCRIPTION of the  
tainous. In this Island is the Hill of *Hoy*, which  
is reckon'd the highest in *Orkney*.

THE Isle of *South-Ronalsbaw* lies to the  
East of *Waes*, it is five Miles in length, and  
fruitful in Corn; *Burray* in the South end is the  
Ferry to *Duncansbay* in *Cathness*. A little fur-  
ther to the South lies *Swinna* Isle, remarkable  
only for a part of *Pightland-Firth* lying to the  
West of it, called the Wells of *Swinna*: They  
are two Whirl-pools in the Sea, which run  
about with such Violence, that any Vessel or  
Boat coming within their reach, go always  
round until they sink. These Wells are dan-  
gerous only when there is a dead Calm; for if  
a Boat be under sail with any Wind, it is easy  
to go over them. If any Boat be forc'd into  
these Wells by the Violence of the Tide, the  
Boat-Men cast a Barrel or an Oar into the Wells;  
and while it is swallowing it up, the Sea con-  
tinues calm, and gives the Boat an opportunity  
to pass over.

TO the North of the Main lies the Isle of  
*Shapinsba*, five Miles in length, and has an Har-  
bour at *Elwick* on the South. Further to the  
North lie the Isles of *Stronsa*, five Miles in  
length, and *Eda* which is four Miles; *Ronsa*  
lies to the North-West, and is six Miles long.  
The Isle *Sanda* lies North, twelve Miles in  
length, and is reckon'd the most fruitful and  
beautiful of all the *Orcades*.

THE

THE Isles of *Orkney* in general are fruitful  
in Corn and Cattle, and abound with store of  
Rabbits.

THE Sheep are very fruitful here, many of  
them have two, some three, and others four  
Lambs at a time; they often die with a Disease  
called the *Sheep-dead*, which is occasion'd by lit-  
tle Animals about half an inch long, that are en-  
gender'd in their Liver.

THE Horses are of a very small size, but  
hardy, and expos'd to the Rigour of the Sea-  
son, during the Winter, and Spring: the Grass  
being then scarce, they are fed with Sea-ware.

THE Fields every where abound with Va-  
riety of Plants and Roots, and the latter are ge-  
nerally very large; the common People dress  
their Leather with the Roots of *Tormentil*, in-  
stead of Bark.

THE main Land is furnish'd with Abun-  
dance of good Marle, which is us'd successul-  
ly by the Husband-Man for manuring the  
Ground.

THE Inhabitants say there are Mines of  
Silver, Tin and Lead in the Main Land, *South-  
Ronalsbaw*, *Stronsa*, *Sanda*, and *Hoy*. Some  
Veins of Marble are to be seen at *Buckquoy*,  
Z 2 and



356 *A DESCRIPTION of the*  
and *Swinna*. There are no Trees in these Isles,  
except in Gardens, and those bear no Fruit.  
Their common Fuel is Peat and Turff, of which  
there is such plenty, as to furnish a Salt-pan  
with Fuel. A South-East and North-West  
Moon cause high Water here.

THE *Finland* Fishermen have been fre-  
quently seen on the Coast of this Isle, particu-  
larly in the Year 1682. The People on the  
Coast saw one of them in his little Boat, and  
endeavour'd to take him, but could not come  
at him, he retir'd so speedily. They say the  
Fish retire from the Coast, when they see these  
Men come to it.

ONE of the Boats, sent from *Orkney* to  
*Edinburgh*, is to be seen in the Physicians Hall,  
with the Oar he makes use of, and the Dart  
with which he kills his Fish.

THERE is no venomous Creature in this  
Country. The Inhabitants say there is a Snail  
there, which has a bright Stone growing in it.  
There is abundance of Shell-Fish here, as Oy-  
sters, Muscles, Crabs, Cockles, &c. of this  
latter they make much fine Lime. The Rocks  
on the shore afford Plenty of Sea-ware, as  
*Alga-Marina*, &c.

THE Sea abounds with Variety of Fish,  
but especially Herring, which are much neglec-  
ted

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 357

ted since the Battle of *Kilsyth*, at which time,  
the Fishermen from *Fife* were almost all kill'd  
there.

THERE are many small Whales round the  
Coast of this Isle; and the *Amphibia* here are  
Otters and Seals.

THE chief Product of *Orkney* that is yearly  
exported from thence, is Corn, Fish, Hides,  
Tallow, Butter, Skins of Seals, Otter-Skins,  
Lamb-Skins, Rabbet-Skins, Stuffs, white Salt,  
Wool, Pens, Down, Feathers, Hams, &c.

SOME *Sperma Ceti*, and *Ambergreese*, as al-  
so the *Os Capier* are found on the shore of seve-  
ral of those Isles.

THIS Country affords Plenty of Sea and  
Land-Fowl, as Geese, Ducks, Solan Geese,  
Swans, Lyres, and Eagles, which are so strong  
as to carry away Children. There is also the  
Cleck-Goose; the Shells in which this Fowl is  
said to be produc'd, are found in several Isles  
sticking to Trees by the Bill; of this kind I  
have seen many: the Fowl was cover'd by a  
Shell, and the Head stuck to the Tree by the  
Bill, but I never saw any of them with Life in  
them upon the Tree; but the Natives told me,  
that they had observ'd 'em to move with the  
Heat of the Sun.

## 358 A DESCRIPTION of the

THE *Picts* are believ'd to have been the first Inhabitants of these Isles, and there are Houses of a round Form in several parts of the Country, called by the name of *Picts Houses*; and for the same reason, the *Firth* is call'd *Pightland* or *Pentland Firth*. Our Historians call these Isles the antient Kingdom of the *Picts*. *Buchanan* gives an account of one *Belus* King of *Orkney*, who being defeated by King *Ewen* the Second of *Scotland*, became desperate, and killed himself. The Effigies of this *Belus* is engraven on a Stone in the Church of *Birsa* on the Main Land. *Boethius* makes mention of another of their Kings, call'd *Bannus*, and by others *Gethus*, who being vanquish'd by *Claudius Caesar*, was by him afterwards, together with his Wife and Family, carry'd captive to *Rome*, and there led in Triumph, *Anno Christi* 43.

THE *Picts* possess'd *Orkney* until the Reign of *Kenneth* the Second of *Scotland*, who subdu'd the Country, and annex'd it to his Crown. From that time *Orkney* was peaceably possess'd by the *Scots*, until about the Year 1099, that *Donald Bane* intending to secure the Kingdom to himself, promis'd both those and the Western Isles to *Magnus* King of *Norway*, upon condition, that he should support him with a competent Force: which he perform'd; and by this means became Master of these Isles, until

the

## Western Islands of Scotland. 359

the Reign of *Alexander* the Third, who by his Valour expell'd the *Danes*. The Kings of *Denmark* did afterwards resign their Title for a Sum of Mony, and this Resignation was ratify'd under the Great Seal of *Denmark*, at the Marriage of King *James* the Sixth of *Scotland*, with *Anne* Princess of *Denmark*.

ORKNEY has been from time to time a Title of Honour to several Persons of great Quality: *Henry* and *William Sinclairs* were call'd Princes of *Orkney*; and *Rothuel Hepburn* was made Duke of *Orkney*: Lord *George Hamilton* (Brother to the present Duke of *Hamilton*) was by the late King *WILLIAM* created Earl of *Orkney*. The Earl of *Morton* had a Mortgage of *Orkney* and *Zetland* from King *Charles* the First, which was since reduc'd by a Decree of the Lords of Session, obtain'd at the Instance of the King's Advocate against the Earl; and this Decree was afterward ratify'd by Act of Parliament, and the Earldom of *Orkney*, and Lordship of *Zetland*, have since that time been erected into a Stewartry. The Reason on which the Decree was founded, is said to have been, that the Earl's Deputy seiz'd upon some Chests of Gold found in the rich *Amsterdam* Ship, called the *Carlmelan*, that was lost in *Zetland*, 1664.

THERE are several Gentlemen of Estates in *Orkney*, but the Queen is the principal Proprietor;

## 360 A DESCRIPTION of the

prietor; and one half of the whole belongs to the Crown, besides the late Accession of the Bishop's Rents, which is about 9000 Merks *Scots per Ann.* There is a yearly Roup of *Orkney Rents*, and he that offers highest is prefer'd to be the King's Steward for the time; and as such, he is principal Judg of the Country. But this precarious Lease is a publick Loss to the Inhabitants, especially the poorer sort, who complain that they would be allow'd to pay Mony for their Corn and Meal in time of Scarcity; but that the Stewards carried it off to other Parts, and neglected the Interest of the Country. The Interest of the Crown suffers likewise by this means, for much of the Crown-Lands lie waste: whereas if there were a constant Steward, it might be much better manag'd, both for the Crown and the Inhabitants.

THERE's a Tenure of Land in *Orkney*, differing from any other in the Kingdom, and this they call *Udal Right*, from *Vlaus King of Norway*, who after taking possession of those Islands, gave a Right to the Inhabitants, on condition of paying the third to himself; and this Right the Inhabitants had successively, without any Charter. All the Lands of *Orkney* are *Udal Lands*, King's Lands, or *Fewed Lands*,

THEY

## Western Islands of Scotland. 361

THEY differ in their Measures from other Parts of *Scotland*, for they do not use the Peck or Firlet, but weigh their Corns in *Pismores*, or *Pundlers*; the least Quantity they call a *Merk*, which is eighteen Ounces, and twenty four make a *Leispound*, or *Setten*, which is the same with the *Danes*, that a Stone weight is with us.

## The Antient State of the Church of Orkney.]

THE Churches of *Orkney* and *Zetland Isles* were formerly under the Government of a Bishop; the Cathedral Church was *St. Magnus* in *Kirkwall*. There are thirty one Churches, and about one hundred Chappels in the Country, and the whole make up about eighteen Parishes.

THIS Diocess had several great Dignities and Privileges for a long time, but by the Succession and Change of many Masters they were lessened. *Dr. Robert Keid* their Bishop, made an Erection of seven Dignities, *viz.* 1. A Provost, to whom, under the Bishop, the Government of the Canons, &c. did belong; he had allotted to him the Prebendary of *Holy Trinity*, and the  
Vica-

## 362 A DESCRIPTION of the

Vicaridge of *South-Ronalshaw*. 2. An Arch-Deacon. 3. A Precentor, who had the Prebendary of *Ophir*, and Vicaridge of *Stenuis*. 4. A Chancellor, who was to be learned in both Laws; to him was given the Prebendary of *St. Mary* in *Sanda*, and the Vicaridge of *Sanda*. 5. A Treasurer, who was to keep the Treasure of the Church, and sacred Vestments. &c. he was Rector of *St. Nicholas* in *Stronsa*. 6. A Sub-Dean, who was Parson of *Hoy*, &c. 7. A Sub-Chanter, who was bound to play on the Organs each Lord's Day, and Festivals; he was Prebendary of *St. Colme*. He erected seven other Canonries and Prebends; to which Dignities he assign'd, besides their Churches, the Rents of the Parsonages of *St. Colme* in *Waes*, and *Holy-Cross* in *Westra*, as also the Vicaridges of the Parish-Churches of *Sand*, *Wick*, and *Stromness*. He erected, besides these, thirteen Chaplains; every one of which was to have 24 *Meils* of Corn, and ten Merks of Mony for their yearly Salary; besides their daily Distributions, which were to be rais'd from the Rents of the Vicaridge of the Cathedral Church, and from the Foundation of *Thomas* Bishop of *Orkney*, and the 12 Pounds ratify'd by King *James* the Third, and *James* the Fourth of *Scotland*. To these he added a *Sacrist*, and six Boys to bear Tapers. The Charter of this Erection is dated at *Kirkwall*, *Octob. 28. Anno 1544.*

THIS

## Western Islands of Scotland. 363

THIS was the State of the Church under Popery. Some time after the Reformation, Bishop *Law* being made Bishop of *Orkney*, and the Earldom united to the Crown (by the Forfeiture and Death of *Patrick Stewart* Earl of *Orkney*) he, with the consent of his Chapter, made a Contract with King *James* the Sixth, in which they resign all their Ecclesiastical Lands to the Crown; and the King gives back to the Bishop several Lands in *Orkney*, as *Hom*, *Orphir*, &c. and his Majesty gave also the *Comissariat* of *Orkney* to the Bishop and his Successors; and then a competent number of Persons for a Chapter were agreed on. This Contract was made *Anno 1614.*

The



The Antient Monuments and Curiosities in these Islands are as follow.

**I**N the Isle of *Hoy*, there's the Dwarfie-Stone between two Hills, it is about thirty four Foot long, and above 16 Foot broad; it is made hollow by Human Industry: it has a small square Entry looking to the East, about two Foot high, and has a Stone proportionable at two Foot distance before the Entry. At one of the Ends within this Stone there is cut out a Bed and Pillow, capable of two Persons to lie in; at the other opposite End there is a void space cut out resembling a Bed; and above both these there is a large Hole, which is suppos'd was a Vent for Smoke. The common Tradition is, that a Giant and his Wife made this their Place of Retreat.

ABOUT a Mile to the West of the Main Land at *Skeal-house*, there is in the top of high Rocks many Stones dispos'd like a Street, about a quarter of a Mile in length, and between twenty and thirty Foot broad. They differ in Figure and Magnitude, are of a red Colour; some resemble a Heart, some a Crown, Leg, Shoe, Last, Weaver's Shuttle, &c.

ON

**O**N the West and East side of *Loch-Stennis*, on the Main Land, there is two Circles of large Stone erected in a Ditch; the larger, which is round on the North West side, is a hundred Paces Diameter, and some of the Stones are twenty foot high, and above four in breadth; they are not all of a height, nor plac'd at an equal distance, and many of them are fallen down on the Ground.

**A**BOUT a little Distance further, there is a Semicircle of larger Stones than those mention'd above. There are two green Mounts, at the East and West side of the Circle, which are suppos'd to be artificial; and *Fibule* of Silver were found in 'em some time ago, which on one side resembled a Horse-shoe, more than any thing else.

**T**HE Hills and Circles are believ'd to have been Places design'd to offer Sacrifice in time of *Pagan* Idolatry; and for this reason the People called them the antient Temples of the Gods, as we may find by *Boethius* in the Life of *Maximus*. Several of the Inhabitants have a Tradition, that the Sun was worshipp'd in the larger, and the Moon in the lesser Circle.

**I**N the Chappel of *Clet*, in the Isle of *Sanda*, there is a Grave of nineteen Foot in length; some who had the Curiosity to open it, found only



## 366 A DESCRIPTION of the

only a piece of a Man's Backbone in it, bigger than that of a Horse. The Minister of the Place had the Curiosity to keep the Bone by him for some time. The Inhabitants have a Tradition of a Giant there, whose Stature was such, that he could reach his Hand as high as the Top of the Chappel. There have been large Bones found lately in *Westra*, and one of the Natives who died not long ago, was for his Stature distinguish'd by the Title of the *Micle*, or great Man of *Waes*.

THERE are erected Stones in divers parts, both of the Main, and lesser Isles, which are believ'd to have been erected as Monuments of such as distinguish'd themselves in Battle.

THERE have been several strange Instances of the Effects of Thunder here; as that of burning *Kirkwall Steeple* by Lightning in the Year 1670. At *Stromness* a Gentleman had twelve Kine, six of which in a Stall were suddenly kill'd by Thunder, and the other six left alive; and it was remarkable that the Thunder did not kill them all as they stood, but kill'd one, and miss'd another. This happen'd in 1680, and is attested by the Minister, and others of the Parish.

THERE is a ruinous Chappel in *Papa Westra*, called *St. Tredwels*, at the Door of which there's a Heap of Stones; which was the Superstition of the common People, who have such

## Western Islands of Scotland. 367

a Veneration for this Chappel above any other, that they never fail, at their coming to it, to throw a Stone as an Offering before the Door: and this they reckon an indispenfible Duty enjoin'd by their Ancestors.

LADY-KIRK in *South-Ronalshaw*, tho' ruinous, and without a Roof, is so much reverenc'd by the Natives, that they chuse rather to repair this old one, than to build a new Church in a more convenient Place, and at a cheaper Rate: Such is the Power of Education, that these Men cannot be cured of these superfluous Fancies, transmitted to them by their ignorant Ancestors.

WITHIN the antient Fabrick of *Lady-Church*, there is a Stone of four Foot in length, and two in breadth, tapering at both ends: this Stone has engraven on it the print of two Feet, concerning which the Inhabitants have the following Tradition; That *St. Magnus* wanting a Boat to carry him over *Pightland-Firth* to the opposite Main Land of *Cathness*, made use of this Stone instead of a Boat, and afterwards carried it to this Church, where it continues ever since: But others have this more reasonable Opinion, that it has been us'd in time of Popery for Delinquents, who were oblig'd to stand bare-foot upon it by way of Penance. Several of the Vulgar inhabiting the lesser Isles, observe the Anniversary of their respective Saints. There is one

368 *A DESCRIPTION of the*  
 one day in Harvest on which the Vulgar abstain  
 from Work, because of an antient and foolish  
 Tradition, that if they do their Work, the  
 Ridges will bleed.

THEY have a Charm for stopping excessive  
 bleeding, either in Man or Beast, whether the  
 Cause be Internal or External; which is per-  
 form'd by sending the Name of the Patient to  
 the Charmer, who adds some more Words to it,  
 and after repeating those Words the Cure is per-  
 form'd, tho the Charmer be several Miles dis-  
 tant from the Patient. They have likewise  
 other Charms which they use frequently at a  
 distance, and that also with success.

THE Inhabitants are well proportioned, and  
 seem to be more Sanguine than they are; the  
 poorer sort live much upon Fish of various  
 kinds, and sometimes without any Bread. The  
 Inhabitants in general are subject to the Scurvy,  
 imputed to the Fish and Salt Meat, which is  
 their daily Food; yet several of the Inhabitants  
 arrive at a great Age: a Woman in *Evie* brought  
 forth a Child in the sixty third Year of her Age.

ONE living in *Kerston* lately, was one  
 hundred and twelve Years old, and went to  
 Sea at one hundred and ten. A Gentleman at  
*Stronsa*, about four Years ago, had a Son at  
 110 Years old. One *William Muir* in *Westra*  
 lived 140 Years, and died about eighteen Years  
 ago.

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 369

ago. The Inhabitants speak the *English* Tongue:  
 several of the Vulgar speak the *Danish* or *Norse*  
 Language; and many among them retain the  
 antient *Danish* Names.

THOSE of *Destruction* are Hospitable and  
 Obliging, the Vulgar are generally Civil and  
 Affable. Both of 'em wear the Habit in fa-  
 shion in the Low-Lands, and some wear a Seal-  
 Skin for Shoes; which they do not sow, but  
 only tie them about their Feet with Strings, and  
 sometimes Thongs of Leather: they are gene-  
 rally able and stout Seamen.

THE common People are very Laborious,  
 and undergo great Fatigues, and no small Ha-  
 zard in Fishing. The Isles of *Orkney* were for-  
 merly liable to frequent Incursions by the *Nor-  
 wegians*, and those inhabiting the Western Isles  
 of *Scotland*. To prevent which, each Village  
 was oblig'd to furnish a large Boat well mann'd  
 to oppose the Enemy, and upon their Landing  
 all the Inhabitants were to appear arm'd; and  
 Beacons were set on the top of the highest Hills  
 and Rocks, to give a general warning on the  
 sight of an approaching Enemy.

ABOUT the Year 1634. Dr. *Graham* being  
 then Bishop of *Orkney*, a young Boy called  
*William Garioch*, had some Acres of Land, and  
 some Cattle, &c. left him by his Father de-  
 ceas'd: he being young, was kept by his Uncle,  
 A a who

## 370 A DESCRIPTION of the

who had a great desire to obtain the Lands, &c. belonging to his Nephew; who being kept short, stole a Setten of Barley, which is about twenty eight Pound Weight, from his Uncle: for which he pursued the Youth, who was then eighteen Years of Age, before the Sheriff. The Theft being prov'd, the Young Man receiv'd Sentence of Death; but going up the Ladder to be hang'd, he pray'd earnestly that God would inflict some visible Judgment on his Uncle, who out of Covetousness had procur'd his Death. The Uncle happen'd after this to be walking in the Church-Yard of *Kirkwall*, and as he stood upon the Young Man's Grave, the Bishop's Dog run at him all of a sudden, and tore out his Throat; and so he became a Monument of God's Wrath against such covetous Wretches. This Account was given to Mr. *Wallace* Minister there, by several that were Witnesses of the Fact.

## S C H E T -

## Western Islands of Scotland. 371

## S C H E T L A N D.

**S**CHETLAND lies North-East from *Orkney*, between the 60 and 61st Degree of Latitude; the distance between the Head of *Sanda*, which is the most Northerly part of *Orkney*, and *Swinburg-head* the most Southerly Point of *Schetland*, is commonly reckon'd to be twenty or twenty one Leagues: the Tides running betwixt are always impetuous, and swelling as well in a Calm as when a fresh Gale blows; and the greatest Danger is near the fair Isle, which lies nearer to *Schetland* than *Orkney* by four Leagues.

THE largest Isle of *Schetland*, by the Natives called the Main-Land, is sixty Miles in length from South-West to the North-East, and from sixteen to one Mile in breadth. Some call these Isles *Hethland*, others *Hoghland*, which in the *Norse* Tongue signifies *Highland*; *Schetland* in the same Language signifies *Sealand*.

THIS Isle is for the most part mossy, and more cultivated on the Shore than in any other Part; it is mountainous, and covered with Heath, which renders it fitter for Pasturage than Tillage. The Inhabitants depend upon

372 *A DESCRIPTION of the*  
 the *Orkney* Isles for their Corn. The Ground is generally so boggy, that it makes riding impracticable, and travelling on Foot not very pleasant; there being several parts into which People sink, to the endangering their Lives, of which there have been several late Instances. About the Summer *Solstice*, they have so much Light all Night, that they can see to read by it. The Sun sets between ten and eleven, and rises between one and two in the Morning, but then the Day is so much the shorter, and the Night longer in the Winter. This, together with the Violence of the Tides and tempestuous Seas, deprives the Inhabitants of all Foreign Correspondence from *October* till *April*, and often till *May*; during which space, they are altogether Strangers to the rest of Mankind, of whom they hear not the least News. A remarkable Instance of this happen'd after the late Revolution: they had no account of the Prince of *Orange's* late Landing in *England*, Coronation, &c. until a Fisherman happen'd to land in these Isles in *May* following: and he was not believed, but indicted for High-Treason, for spreading such News.

THE Air of this Isle is cold and piercing, notwithstanding which, many of the Inhabitants arrive at a great Age; of which there are several remarkable Instances. *Buchanan* in his *Hist. lib. 1.* gives an Account of one *Laurence*, who lived

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 373

lived in his time, some of whose Offspring do still live in the Parish of *Waes*; this Man, after he arrived at one hundred Years of Age, married a Wife, went out a fishing when he was One Hundred and Forty Years old, and upon his return, died rather of Old Age, than of any Distemper.

THE Inhabitants give an Account of one *Tairville*, who arrived at the Age of One Hundred and Eighty, and never drank any Malt Drink, distilled Waters, nor Wine. They say that his Son liv'd longer than him, and that his Grandchildren liv'd to a Good Age, and seldom or never drank any stronger Liquors than Milk, Water or Bland.

THE Disease that afflicts the Inhabitants here most, is the Scurvy, which they suppose is occasion'd by their eating too much Salt-Fish. There is a Distemper here call'd Bastard Scurvy, which discovers it self by the falling of the Hair from the Peoples Eyebrows, and the falling of their Noses, &c. and as soon as the Symptoms appear, the Persons are remov'd to the Fields, where little Houses are built for them on purpose, to prevent Infection. The principal Cause of this Distemper is believed to be want of Bread, and feeding on Fish alone, particularly the Liver: many poor Families are sometimes without Bread, for three, four,

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374 *A DESCRIPTION of the*  
 or five Months together. They say likewise that their drinking of Bland, which is their universal Liquor, and preserv'd for the Winter as part of their Provisions, is another Cause of this Distemper. This Drink is made of Buttermilk mix'd with Water; there be many of 'em who never taste Ale or Beer, for their Scarcity of Bread is such, that they can spare no Corn for Drink: so that they have no other than Bland, but what they get from foreign Vessels that resort thither every Summer to fish.

THE Isles in general afford a great Quantity of Scurvy-grass, which us'd discreetly, is found to be a good Remedy against this Disease. The Jaundice is commonly cur'd by drinking the Powder of Shell-snails among their Drink, in the space of three or four days. They first dry, then pulverize the Snails; and it is observable, that tho' this Dust should be kept all the Year round, and grow into Vermine, it may be dry'd again, and pulveriz'd for that use.

THE Isles afford abundance of Sea-fowl, which serve the Inhabitants for part of their Food during Summer and Harvest, and the Down and Feathers bring 'em great Gain.

THE several Tribes of Fowl here build and hatch apart, and every Tribe keeps close together, as if it were by consent. Some of the  
 lesser

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 375

lesser Isles are so croud'd with Variety of Sea-fowl, that they darken the Air when they fly in great Numbers. After their coming, which is commonly in *February*, they sit very close together for some time, till they recover the Fatigue of their long Flight from their remote Quarters; and after they have hatch'd their Young, and find they are able to fly, they go away together to some other unknown Place.

THE People inhabiting the lesser Isles have abundance of Eggs and Fowl, which contribute to maintain their Families during the Summer.

THE Common People are generally very dextrous in climbing the Rocks, in quest of those Eggs and Fowl; but this Exercise is attended with very great Danger, and sometimes proves fatal to those that venture too far.

THE most remarkable Experiment of this sort, is at the Isle call'd the *Noss* of *Brassah*, and is as follows: The *Noss* being about sixteen Fathom distant from the side of the opposite Main; the higher and lower Rocks have two Stakes fasten'd in each of them, and to these there are Ropes tied: upon the Ropes there is an Engine hung, which they call a Cradle; and in this a Man makes his way over from the greater to the lesser Rocks, where he makes a considerable Purchase of Eggs and  
 A a 4 Fowl;



376 *A DESCRIPTION of the*

Fowl; but his Return being by an Ascent, makes it the more dangerous, tho those on the great Rock have a Rope tied to the Cradle, by which they draw it and the Man safe over for the most part.

THERE are some Rocks here, computed to be about three hundred Fathom high; and the way of climbing them, is to tie a Rope about a Man's Middle, and let him down with a Basket, in which he brings up his Eggs and Fowl. The Isle of *Foula* is the most dangerous and fatal to the Climbers, for many of them perish in the Attempt.

THE Crows are very numerous in *Schetland*, and differ in their Colour from those on the main Land; for the Head, Wings and Tail of those in *Schetland* are only black, and their Back, Breast and Tail of a grey Colour. When black Crows are seen there at any time, the Inhabitants say it is a Presage of approaching Famine.

THERE are fine Hawks in these Isles, and particularly those of *Fair Isle* are reputed among the best that are to be had any where; they are observ'd to go far for their Prey, and particularly for Moor-Fowl as far as the Isles of *Orkney*, which are about sixteen Leagues from them.

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*Western Islands of Scotland.* 377

THERE are likewise many Eagles in and about these Isles, which are very destructive to the Sheep and Lambs.

THIS Country produces little Horses, commonly call'd *Shelties*, and they are very sprightly, tho the least of their kind to be seen any where; they are lower in Stature than those of *Orkney*, and it is common for a Man of ordinary Strength to lift a *Sheltie* from the ground: yet this little Creature is able to carry double. The black are esteem'd to be the most hardy, but the pyed ones seldom prove so good: they live many times till thirty Years of Age, and are fit for Service all the while. These Horses are never brought into a House, but expos'd to the Rigour of the Season all the Year round; and when they have no Grass, feed upon Sea-ware, which is only to be had at the Tide of Ebb.

THE Isles of *Schetland* produce many Sheep, which have two and three Lambs at a time; they would be much more numerous, did not the Eagles destroy them: they are likewise reduc'd to feed on Sea-ware during the Frost and Snow.

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The Lesser Isles of SCHE TLAND  
are as follow.

THE Isle *Trondra*, which lies opposite to *Scalloway* Town, on the West; three Miles long, and two broad.

FURTHER to the North-East lies the Isle of *Whalsay*, about three Miles in length, and as many in breadth; the Rats are very numerous here, and do abundance of mischief; by destroying the Corn.

AT some further distance lie the small Isles call'd *Skerries*; there is a Church in one of them. These Isles and Rocks prove often fatal to Seamen, but advantageous to the Inhabitants, by the Wrecks and Goods that the Wind and Tides drive ashore; which often supplies them with Fuel, of which they are altogether destitute. It was here that the *Carmelan* of *Amsterdam* was cast away, as bound for the *East-Indies*, Ann. 1664. Among the rich Cargo she had several Chests of coin'd Gold, the whole was valu'd at 3000000 Guilders; of all the Crew four only were saved. The Inhabitants of the small Isles, among other Advantages they had by this Wreck, had the pleasure of drinking

drinking liberally of the strong Drink which was driven ashore in large Casks, for the space of three Weeks.

BETWEEN *Brassa-Sound* and the opposite Main, lies the *Unicorn*, a dangerous Rock, visible only at low Water; it is so call'd ever since a Vessel of that Name perish'd upon it, commanded by *William Kirkaldy* of *Gronge*, who was in eager Pursuit of the Earl of *Bothwell*, and very near him when his Ship struck.

ON the East lies the Isle call'd *Fisholm*: to the North-East lies *Little Rue*, and on the West *Mickle Rue*; the latter is eight Miles in length, and two in breadth, and has a good Harbour.

NEAR to *Esting* lie the Isles of *Vemantry*, which have several Harbours; *Orney*, little *Papa*, *Helisba*, &c.

TO the North-West of the *Ness* lies *St. Ninian's* Isle; it has a Chappel and an Altar in it, upon which some of the Inhabitants retain the antient superstitious Custom of burning Candle.

PAPA-STOUR is two Miles in length; it excels any Isle of its Extent for all the Conveniences of human Life: it has four good Harbours

380. *A DESCRIPTION of the*  
bours, one of which looks to the South, another  
to the West, and two to the North.

THE *Lyra-Skerries*, so call'd from the Fowl  
of that Name that abound in them, lie near  
this Isle.

ABOUT six Leagues West of the Main,  
lies the Isle *Foula*, about three Miles in length;  
it has a Rock remarkable for its height, which  
is seen from *Orkney* when the Weather is fair:  
it hath an Harbour on one side.

THE Isle of *Brassa* lies to the East of  
*Tingwal*; it is five Miles in length, and two  
in breadth: some parts of the Coast are a-  
rable Ground; and there are two Churches  
in it.

FURTHER to the East lies the small Isle  
call'd the *Nofs of Brassa*.

THE Isle of *Burray* is three Miles long, has  
good Pasturage, and abundance of Fish on its  
Coast; it has a large Church and Steeple in it.  
The Inhabitants say that Mice do not live in  
this Isle, when brought to it; and that the  
Earth of it being brought to any other part  
where the Mice are, they will quickly aban-  
don it.

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*Western Islands of Scotland.* 381

*HAVEROY-ISLE*, which is a Mile and  
a half in length, lies to the South-East of  
*Burray*.

THE Isle of *Tell* is sixteen Miles long, and  
from eight to one in breadth; it lies North-East  
from the Main: there are three Churches, and  
several small Chappels in it.

THE Isle of *Hakashie* is two Miles long,  
*Samphrey* Isle one Mile long, *Biggai* Isle is a  
Mile and a half in length; all three lie round  
*Tell*, and are reputed among the best of the  
lesser Isles.

THE Isle of *Fetlor* lies to the North-East  
of *Tell*, and is five Miles in length, and four  
in breadth; it hath a Church, and some of the  
*Pitts* Houses in it.

THE Isle *Unst* is eight Miles long, and is  
the pleasantest of the *Schetland* Isles; it has three  
Churches, and as many Harbours: it is rec-  
kon'd the most Northern of all the *British* Do-  
minions. The Inhabitants of the Isle *Vaila* say,  
that no Cat will live in it, and if any Cat be  
brought to it, they will rather venture to Sea,  
than stay in the Isle. They say, that a Cat  
was seen upon the Isle about fifty Years ago;  
but how it came there, was unknown. They  
observ'd

## 382 A DESCRIPTION of the

observ'd about the same time, how the Proprietor was in great Torment, and as they suppose by Witchcraft, of which they say he then died. There is no account that any Cat has been seen in the Isle ever since that Gentleman's Death, except when they were carry'd to it, for making the above-mention'd Experiment.

THE Inhabitants say, that if a Compass be plac'd at the House of *Udsta*, on the West-side of the Isle *Fetlor*, the Needle will be in perpetual Disorder, without fixing to any one Pole; and that being tried afterwards in the top of that House, it had the same Effect. They add further, that when a Vessel sails near that House, the Needle of the Compass is disorder'd in the same manner.

THERE is a yellow sort of Metal lately discover'd in the Isle of *Uzia*, but the Inhabitants had not found a way to melt it; so that it is not yet turn'd to any account.

The

## Western Islands of Scotland. 383

## The Antient Court of Justice

IN these Islands was held in *Holm*, in the Parish of *Tingwall*, in the middle of the main Land. This *Holm* is an Island in the middle of a fresh-water Lake; it is to this day call'd the *Law-Ting*, and the Parish, in all probability, hath its Name from it. The Entrance to this *Holm* is by some Stones laid in the Water; and in the *Holm* there are four great Stones, upon which sat the Judg, Clerk, and other Officers of the Court. The Inhabitants, that had Law-Suits, attended at some distance from the *Holm*, on the other side the Lake; and when any of them was call'd by the Officer, he entred by the stepping Stones; and being dismiss'd, he return'd the same way. This was the Practice of the *Danes*. The Inhabitants have a Tradition among them, that after one had receiv'd Sentence of Death upon the *Holm*, he obtain'd a Remission, provided he made his Escape through the Croud of People on the Lake side, and touch'd *Tingwall* Steeple before any could lay hold on him. This Steeple in those days was an *Asylum* for Malefactors and Debtors to flee into. The Inhabitants of this Isle are all Protestants; they generally speak the *English* Tongue, and many among them retain the  
antient

384 *A DESCRIPTION of the*  
 antient *Danish* Language, especially in the more  
 Northern Isles. There are several who speak  
*English, Norse* and *Dutch*; the last of which is  
 acquir'd by their Converse with the *Hollanders*,  
 that fish yearly in those Isles.

THE People are generally reputed discreet,  
 and charitable to Strangers; and those of the best  
 Rank are fashionable in their Apparel.

*SCHETLAND* is much more populous now,  
 than it was thirty Years ago; which is owing  
 to the Trade, and particularly that of their  
 Fishery, so much follow'd every Year by the  
*Hollanders, Hamburgers*, and others. The In-  
 crease of People at *Lerwick* is considerable; for  
 it had but three or four Families about thirty  
 Years ago, and is since increas'd to about three  
 hundred Families: and it is observable, that  
 few of their Families were Natives of *Schet-*  
*land*, but came from several Parts of *Scotland*,  
 and especially from the Northern and Eastern  
 Coasts.

THE Fishery in *Schetland* is the Foundation  
 both of their Trade and Wealth; and tho it be  
 of late become less than before, yet the Inha-  
 bitants, by their Industry and Application, make  
 a greater Profit of it than formerly, when they  
 had them nearer the Coast, both of the larger  
 and lesser Isles; but now the grey Fish of the  
 largest

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 385

largest Size are not to be had in any quantity  
 without going further into the Ocean. The Fish  
 commonly bought by Strangers here, are Cod  
 and Ling; the Inhabitants themselves make on-  
 ly use of the smaller Fish and Herrings, which  
 abound on the Coast of this Isle in vast Shoals.

THE Fish call'd *Tusk* abounds on the Coast  
 of *Brassa*; the time for Fishing is at the end of  
*May*. This Fish is as big as a Ling, of a brown  
 and yellow Colour, has a broad Tail; it is bet-  
 ter fresh than salted. They are commonly sold  
 at fifteen or sixteen Shillings the hundred.

THE Inhabitants observe, that the further  
 they go to the Northward, the Fish are of a  
 larger Size, and in greater Quantities. They  
 make great store of Oil, particularly of the  
 large grey Fish, by them call'd *Seths*, and the  
 younger sort *Sillucks*: they say that the Liver of  
 one *Seth* affords a Pint of *Scots* Measure, being  
 about four of *English* Measure. The way of ma-  
 king the Oil, is first by boiling the Liver in a Pot  
 half full of Water, and when it boils, the Oil  
 goes to the top, and is skim'd off, and put in  
 Vessels for use. The Fishers observe of late,  
 that the Livers of Fish are less in Size than they  
 have been formerly.

THE *Hamburgers, Bremers*, and others, come  
 to this Country about the middle of *May*, set  
 up Shops in several parts, and sell divers Com-  
 modities;



## 386 A DESCRIPTION of the

modities; as Linen, Mullin, and such things as are most proper for the Inhabitants, but more especially, Beer, Brandy and Bread: all which they barter for Fish, Stockings, Mutton, Hens, &c. And when the Inhabitants ask Money for their Goods, they receive it immediately.

IN the Month of *June*, the *Hollanders* come with their Fishing-Busses in great Numbers upon the Coast for Herring; and when they come into the Sound of *Brassa*, where the Herring are commonly most plentiful, and very near the Shore, they dispose their Nets, &c. in order, but never begin till the twenty fourth of *June*; for this is the time limited among themselves, which is observ'd as a Law, that none will venture to transgress. This Fishing-Trade is very beneficial to the Inhabitants, who have Provisions and Necessaries imported to their Doors; and Employment for all their People, who by their Fishing, and selling the various Products of the Country, bring in a considerable Sum of Money yearly. The Proprietors of the Ground are considerable Gainers also, by letting their Houses, which serve as Shops to the Seamen, during their Residence here.

THERE have been two thousand Busses, and upwards, fishing in this Sound in one Summer; but they are not always so numerous: they generally go away in *August* or *September*.

THERE

## Western Islands of Scotland. 387

THERE are two little Towns in the largest of the *Schetland* Isles: the most antient of these is *Scalloway*; it lies on the West-side of the Isle, which is the most beautiful and pleasant part of it. It hath no Trade, and but few Inhabitants, the whole being about ninety in number. On the South-East end of the Town stands the Castle of *Scalloway*, which is four Stories high; it hath several Conveniences and useful Houses about it, and 'tis well furnish'd with Water. Several Rooms have been curiously painted, tho' the better part be now worn off. This antient House is almost ruinous, there being no care taken to repair it. It serv'd as a Garison for the *English* Soldiers that were sent hither by *Crommel*. This House was built by *Patrick Stewart* Earl of *Orkney*, Anno 1600. The Gate hath the following Inscription on it: *Patricius Orchadia & Zelandia Comes*. And underneath the Inscription; *Cujus fundamen saxum est, Domus illa manebit; Labilis è contra si sit arena, perit*: That House, whose Foundation is on a Rock, shall stand; but if on the Sand, it shall fall.

THE Inhabitants say, that this House was built upon the sandy Foundation of Oppression, in which they say the Earl exceeded; and for that and other Crimes was executed.

THERE is a high Stone erected between *Tingwall* and *Scalloway*: the Inhabitants have a

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388 A DESCRIPTION of the

Tradition, that it was set up as a Monument of a *Danish* General, who was kill'd there by the ancient Inhabitants, in a Battle against the *Danes* and *Norwegians*.

THE second and latest-built Town is *Lerwick*; it stands on that side of the Sound where the Fishing is: the Ground on which it is built is a hard Rock, one side lies toward the Sea, and the other is surrounded with a Moss, without any arable Ground.

ON the North is the Citadel of *Lerwick*, which was built in the Year 1665. in time of the War with *Holland*, but never compleated; there is little more of it now left than the Walls. The Inhabitants, about thirty Years ago, fished up three Iron Cannons out of a Ship that had been cast away near eighty Years before; and being all over Rust, they made a great Fire of Peats round them to get off the Rust: and the Fire having heated the Cannon, all the three went off, to the great Surprize of the Inhabitants; who say, they saw the Ball fall in the middle of *Brassa* Sound, but none of 'em had any Damage by them.

THERE are many *Picts* Houses in this Country, and several of them entire to this day; the highest exceeds not twenty or thirty Foot in height, and are about twelve Foot broad in the middle

*Western Islands of Scotland.* 389.

middle; they taper towards both Ends, the Entry is lower than the Doors of Houses commonly are now, the Windows are long and very narrow, and the Stairs go up between the Walls. These Houses were built for Watch-Towers, to give notice of an approaching Enemy; there is not one of them but what is in view of some other: so that a Fire being made on the top of any one House, the Signal was communicated to all the rest in a few moments.

THE Inhabitants say, that these Houses were call'd *Burghs*, which in the *Saxon* Language signifies a Town or Castle fenc'd all round. The Names of fortify'd Places in the *Western Isles*, are in several parts called *Borg*; and the Villages in which the Forts stand, are always nam'd *Borg*.

THE Inhabitants of *Orkney* say, that several Burying-Places among them are call'd *Burghs*, from the *Saxon* Word *Burying*.

IT is generally acknowledg'd that the *Picts* were originally *Germans*, and particularly from that Part of it bordering upon the *Baltick* Sea. They were call'd *Phightian*, that is Fighters: The *Romans* call'd them *Peti*. Some Writers call them *Pictavi*, either from that Name of *Phightian*, which they took to themselves, or from their Beauty: and accordingly *Boethius*, in his Character of them, joins both these together;

390 A DESCRIPTION of the  
ther; *Quod erant corporibus robustissimis candi-  
disque*: and *Verstegan* says the same of them.

THE *Romans* called them *Picti*, because they had their Shields painted of divers Colours. Some think the Name came from *Pichk*, which in the antient *Scots* Language signifies Pitch, that they colour'd their Faces with, to make them terrible to their Enemies in Battle; and others think the Name was taken from their painted Habit.

THIS Isle makes Part of the Shire of *Orkney*; there are twelve Parishes in it, and a greater Number of Churches and Chappels. *Schetland* pays not above one third to the Crown of what *Orkney* does.

THE Ground being for the most part boggy and moorish, is not so productive of Grain as the other Isles and Main-Land of *Scotland*; and if it were not for the Sea-ware, by which the Ground is enrich'd, it would yield but a very small Product.

THERE is lately discover'd in divers Parts, abundance of Lime-stone, but the Inhabitants are not sufficiently instructed in the use of it, for their Corn-Land.

THERE is plenty of good Peats, which serve as Fuel for the Inhabitants, especially on the Main. THE

Western Islands of Scotland. 391

THE *Amphibia* in these Isles, are Seals and Otters in abundance; some of the latter are train'd to go a fishing, and fetch several sorts of Fish home to their Masters.

THERE are no Trees in any of these Isles, neither is there any venomous Creature to be found here.

THERE have been several strange Fish seen by the Inhabitants at Sea, some of the Shape of Men as far as the Middle; they are both troublesome and very terrible to the Fishers, who call them Sea-Devils.

IT is not long since every Family of any considerable Substance in those Islands, was haunted by a Spirit they called *Brownny*, which did several sorts of Work; and this was the reason why they gave him Offerings of the various Products of the Place: thus some when they churn'd their Milk, or brew'd, pour'd some Milk and Wort through the Hole of a Stone, called *Brownny's* Stone.

A MINISTER in this Country had an account from one of the antient Inhabitants who formerly brew'd Ale, and sometimes read his Bible, that an old Woman in the Family told him that *Brownny* was much displeas'd at his reading

## 392 A DESCRIPTION, &amp;c.

ing in that Book; and if he did not cease to read in it any more, *Brownny* would not serve him as formerly. But the Man continu'd his reading notwithstanding, and when he brew'd refus'd to give any Sacrifice to *Brownny*; and so his first and second Brewing miscarried, without any visible Cause in the Malt: but the third Brewing prov'd good, and *Brownny* got no more Sacrifice from him after that.

THERE was another Instance of a Lady in *Unst*, who refus'd to give Sacrifice to *Brownny*, and lost two Brewings; but the third prov'd good, and so *Brownny* vanished quite, and troubled them no more.

I SHALL add no more, but that the great number of foreign Ships which repair hither yearly upon the account of Fishing, ought to excite the People of *Scotland* to a speedy Improvement of that profitable Trade; which they may carry on with more Ease and Profit in their own Seas, than any Foreigners whatever.

F I N I S.

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