

at the head of the coomb; and then the still, dark lake itself, so impressively the result of the damming back of the water by the bars of detritus thrown across the glen.¹ The stream that issues from the lake is busy cutting down the moraine-barrier, and every rain-storm helps to sweep down detritus from the surrounding crags and slopes into the lake. Eventually Loch Skene will be drained, and its site will become a grassy plain like that of the Midlaw Burn above it (Fig. 71).

But the mass of high ground between Nithsdale and St. Patrick's Channel was the chief seat of glaciers in the south of Scotland. Indeed the proofs of intense glacial action there are hardly less striking than in the mountainous parts of the Highlands. Most of the innumerable lakes of that district lie either in hollows among moraine mounds, or in ice-worn basins scooped out of the rock. Thus, between the foot of the range of the Merrick Hills and the Bay of Luce, the ground is one wide expanse of moor, roughened with thousands of heaps of glacier detritus, and dotted with scores of lakes enclosed among these rubbish mounds. The mass of ice which came down from the high grounds and moved westward and southward must have been very great. Between the head of the Stinchar and Wigtown Bay it must have been fully five-and-twenty miles broad, moving towards the south with resistless force, for all the hills and hummocks of rock in its way are ground down, polished, and striated, and the surface of the country is strewn with mounds, ridges, and heaps of clay, gravel, and boulders.

¹ Dr. Robert Chambers published an allusion to the moraines of Loch Skene in the *Edin. New Phil. Journ.*, New Series, vol. ii. p. 184. The first description of them was, I believe, that given in my memoir on the *Glacial Drift of Scotland*, p. 160. They were afterwards carefully mapped in great detail by Dr. Young, and the chief results are given in his paper, *Quart. Journ. Geol. Soc.* for 1864.