

islands, may be taken as typical for the raised marine platforms of the whole country.

Along the inner margin of this old sea-beach, the ground usually rises precipitously, like the shelving banks and steep cliffs of the present sea-coast. This inland cliff is not unfrequently scarped into clefts and creeks, and perforated with caves, and the flat terrace beneath it is sometimes roughened with prominent crags and worn pillars of rock, like the tangle-covered skerries and sea-stacks of the modern coast-line. These prominent rocks, whether on the terrace, or rising steeply from its inner edge, are feathered over with ferns and ivy and trailing briers; they are tinted with mosses and lichens, and gay with many a bud and blossom. Luxuriant bunches of hart's tongue hang from the roofs of the caves, and swallows build their nests in the crannies of the cliff. But could we divest the rocks of all this tapestry of verdure, could we strip the terrace of its mantle of gardens and fields, its highways and hedgerows, its villas and hamlets, its busy seaport towns and watering-places, we should then lay bare a former sea-beach. Instead of the level cornfields and orchards of the present terrace, we have to imagine a tract of sand or mud; for the mosses and lichens, ferns and flowers, a shaggy covering of sea-weed; in place of swallows, martins, and rock-pigeons, we must people the rocks once more with gulls and auks and cormorants; we must in imagination watch the tides come eddying across the terrace among the rocks and the cliff: and we may thus restore that old coast-line to the condition in which it existed when already a human population had found a home upon these shores.

The twenty-five feet beach must be more or less familiar to every one who has visited almost any part of the coast-line of Scotland. It runs as a terrace along the margin of the Firth of Forth; it forms the broad Carse of Gowrie; it