

patches of several miles, separated by intervals of rock, of equal or greater extent. In some places the sandy shores are flat, or very gently sloping, forming what are here called Fords; in others, behind the beach, there is an accumulation of sand to the height of from twenty to sixty feet, formed into hillocks. This sand is constantly drifting; and in several places islands have been formed by the removal of isthmi. The parts immediately behind the beach are also liable to be inundated by the sand; and in this manner most of the islands have suffered very considerable damage. Those of Pabbay and Berneray in Harris may be particularised; in the former of which, a tract of about a mile and a-half long, by half a mile in breadth, has been converted into a desert of drifting sand; and in the latter a large plain, that was formerly noted for its fertility, has been entirely swept away. The sand consists almost entirely of comminuted shells, apparently of the species which are found in the neighbouring seas. It is rather coarse in the grain; but, during high winds, by the rubbing of its particles upon each other, a sort of dust is formed, which, at a distance, resembles smoke, and which, in the Island of Berneray, I have seen driven into the sea, to the distance of upwards of two miles, appearing like a thin white fog. The cure of sand drift has been attempted in these islands in two different ways. Mr Alexander Macleod, surgeon of North Uist, is the inventor of the most efficacious method, which is that of cutting thin square turfs from the neighbouring pasture grounds, and laying them down at intervals of some inches. In the course of a very few years the turfs coalesce, and the stript ground is little the worse; for the roots remaining in it, a new vegetation rapidly springs up. The other method was introduced by Mr Macleod