

tains a large amount of amusing and extraordinary fact and his description of the formation of a peat-moss in the central Highlands of Ross-shire has been quoted by almost every naturalist who, since the days of the sagacious nobleman, has written on the formation of peat. His life was extended to extreme old age; and as his literary ardor remained undiminished till the last, some of his writings were produced at a period when most other men are sunk in the incurious indifference and languor of old age. And among these later productions are his remarks on peat. He relates that, when a very young man, he had marked, in passing on a journey through the central Highlands of Ross-shire, a wood of very ancient trees, doddered and moss-grown, and evidently passing into a state of death through the last stages of decay. He had been led by business into the same district many years after, when in middle life, and found that the wood had entirely disappeared, and that the heathy hollow which it had covered was now occupied by a green, stagnant morass, unvaried in its tame and level extent by either bush or tree. In his old age he again visited the locality, and saw the green surface roughened with dingy-colored hollows, and several Highlanders engaged in it in cutting peat in a stratum several feet in depth. What he had once seen an aged forest had now become an extensive peat-moss.

Some time towards the close of the seventeenth century he purchased the lands of Cromarty, where his turn for minute observation seems to have anticipated — little, however, to his own profit — some of the later geological discoveries. There is a deep, wooded ravine in the neighborhood of the town, traversed by a small stream, which has laid bare, for the space of about forty yards in the opening of the hollow the gray sandstone and stratified clays of the inferior fish