

ciple,—the fire in the midst,—as handed down from the “days of other years,” that in the plan of a new two-storied house for his father, which he had procured from a London architect, one of the nether rooms was actually designed in the circular form ; and a hearth like a millstone, placed in the centre, represented the place of the fire. But there was, as I remarked to Cousin George, no corresponding central hole in the room above, through which to let up the smoke ; and I questioned whether a nicely-plastered apartment, round as a band box, with a fire in the middle, like the sun in the centre of an Orrery, would have been quite like anything ever seen in the Highlands before. The plan, however, was not destined to encounter criticism, or give trouble in the execution of it.

On Sabbaths my cousin and his two brothers attended the parish church, attired in the full Highland dress ; and three handsome, well-formed men they were ; but my aunt, though mayhap not quite without the mother’s pride, did not greatly relish the exhibition ; and oftener than once I heard her say so to her sister my mother ; though she, smitten by the gallant appearance of her nephews, seemed inclined rather to take the opposite side. My uncle, on the other hand, said nothing either for or against the display. He had been a keen Highlander in his younger days ; and when the inhibition against wearing tartan and the philabeg had been virtually removed, in consideration of the achievements of the “hardy and dauntless men” who, according to Chatham, conquered for England “in every quarter of the globe,” he had celebrated the event in a merry-making, at which the dance was kept up from night till morning ; but though he retained, I suspect, his old partialities, he was now a sobered man ; and when I ventured to ask him, on one occasion, why he too did not get a Sunday kilt, which, by the way, he would “*have set*,” notwithstanding his years, as well as any of his sons, he merely replied with a quiet “No, no ; there’s no fool like an old fool.”