

CHAPTER XII.

“Far let me wander down thy craggy shore,
With rocks and trees bestrewn, dark Loch Maree.”

SMALL.

THE restorative powers of a constitution which at this time it took much hard usage to injure, came vigorously into operation on my removal from the wet ditch and the ruinous hovel; and ere the close of winter I had got once more into my ordinary state of robust health. I read, wrote, drew, corresponded with my friend William Ross (who had removed to Edinburgh), re-examined the Eathie Lias, and re-explored the Eathie Burn,—a noble Old Red Sandstone ravine, remarkable for the wild picturesqueness of its cliffs and the beauty of its cataracts. I spent, too, many an evening in Uncle James’s workshop, on better terms with both my uncles than almost ever before,—a consequence, in part, of the sober complexion which, as the seasons passed, my mind was gradually assuming, and, in part, of the manner in which I had completed my engagement with my master. “Act always,” said Uncle James, “as you have done in this matter. In all your dealings, give your neighbor the *cast of the bank*,—‘good measure heaped up and running over,’—and you will not lose by it in the end.” I certainly did not lose by faithfully serving out my term of apprenticeship. It is not uninteresting to observe how strangely the public are led at times to attach para-