

inquiry. Sometimes I spent half a week in a farm-house in the neighborhood of some country churchyard,—sometimes I lodged in a village,—oftener than once I sheltered beside some gentleman's seat, where the august shadow of lairdship lay heavy on society; and in this way I came to see and know a good deal of the Scottish people, in their many-colored aspects, of which otherwise I might have remained ignorant. At times, too, on some dusty cottage shelf I succeeded in picking up a rare book, or, what was not less welcome, got a curious tradition from the cottager; or there lay within the reach of an evening walk some interesting piece of antiquity, or some rock-section, which I found it profitable to visit. A solitary burying-ground, too, situated, as country burying-grounds usually are, in some pleasant spot, and surrounded by its groupes of ancient trees, formed a much more delightful scene of labor than a dusty work-shed, or some open area in a busy town; and altogether I found my new mode of life a quiet and happy one. Nor, with all its tranquillity, was it a sort of life in which the intellect was in any great danger of falling asleep. There was scarce a locality in which new game might not be started, that, in the running down, kept the faculties in full play. Let me exemplify by describing the courses of inquiry, physical and metaphysical, which opened up to me when spending a few days, first in the burying-ground of Kirk-michael, and next in the churchyard of Nigg.

I have elsewhere somewhat fancifully described the ruinous chapel and solitary grave-yard of Kirkmichael as lying on the sweep of a gentle declivity, within a few yards of a flat sea-beach; so little exposed to the winds, that it would seem as if "ocean muffled its waves in approaching this field of the dead." And so the two vegetations,—that of the land and of the sea,—undisturbed by the surf, which on opener coasts prevents the growth of either along the upper littoral line, where the waves beat heaviest, here meet and mingle, each encroaching for a little way on the province of the other. And at meal-times, and when returning homewards in the evening along the shore it furnished me with amusement enough to