

advancing on the regions of barbarism, and sending out their piquets and their advanced guards far into the waste ;—not barbarism that is bursting in, as of old, to bear down civilization and the arts. But we can at once recognise these principles,—principles, indeed, too obvious not to be recognised,—and yet regret cases of what we may term wholesome emigration none the less. Nothing can be more healthy than the drain on a redundant town or country population : it is blood-letting to an apoplectic patient ; and the emigrating thousands are as little missed as water withdrawn from the ocean. “The crowds close in, and all’s forgotten.” Very different is the case, however, when the population of upland districts have been torn up root and branch, and uninhabited wildernesses formed where a simple-hearted but surely noble race lived contented in times of quiet, and constituted the strength of their country in the day of war. There have been cottages on many a hill-side emptied of their inhabitants within the last twenty years, which shall never again be gladdened by the domestic circle ; and the heath is creeping slowly in lonely dells and sweeping acclivities, over many a narrow range of meadow, and many a little field, whose flattened and sinking furrows shall never again yield to the plough. The contemplation of such scenes amid the depopulated solitudes of the Highlands has always inclined me to sadness, especially in the inland districts, which, as they had no dependence on the fluctuations of trade, were little exposed to those extreme depressions which have borne so heavily of late years on the inhabitants of the islands and the sea-coasts, and in which, I know from experience, much happiness has been enjoyed, and an intense love of country cherished.

Rather more than twelve years ago I was led into the central Highlands of the north. I first left behind me the comparatively level fields of the low country, with their hedges and intervening belts of planting, and then the upper