

[Of the wide-spread desolation caused by these remarkable floods, Sir Thomas Dick Lauder published a very accurate and impressive description.* We shall quote but a single example—the effect of the inundation on the small parish of Knockando :—

“ The Knockando burn, entering the River Spey from the left, is extremely small, but was swollen by the flood to a size equal to that of the Spey in its ordinary state. The high promontory on the neck of which the manse of Knockando stands shoots forwards towards the steep opposite banks of the burn, interrupting the continuity of its haughs by a narrow pass, leaving room only at the base of the precipice for two cottages, a small garden, and a road. Where the glen opens, a little way above, there stood a carding-mill, a meal-mill, and the houses of their occupants. Of the two cottages at the bottom of the promontory, one was inhabited by the old bellman, his wife and daughter, and a blind beggar-woman, who had that night sought quarters with them ; the other was tenanted by a poor lame woman, who kept a school for girls and young children. After the flood, the prospect here was melancholy : the burn, that formerly wound through the beautiful haugh above the promontory, had cut a channel as broad as that of the Spey from one end of it to the other. The whole wood was gone ; the carding-mill had disappeared ; the miller’s house was in ruins ; and the banks below were strewn with pales, gates, bridges, rafts, engines, wool, yarn, and half-woven webs—all utterly destroyed.”]

The annual thaw of the glaciers also gives rise to regular floods in the brooks or rivers which they feed.

Many of our European rivers, which are not very rapid, freeze during winter, and cover themselves with a crust of ice, often of great thickness. At the epoch of its breaking-up in spring, the ice gives way at those points where it possesses the least tenacity ; the waters then sweep along with them large blocks and fragments which, on encountering an obstacle, accumulate, and gather one upon another,

* [Sir T. D. Lauder, Bart., “ Account of the Floods in Morayshire.”]