

of a bygone state of society through the chance vistas of tradition. They serve to show us, in the expressive language of Scripture, "the rock whence we were hewn, and the hole of the pit whence we were dug." They serve, too, to dissipate those dreamy imaginings of the good and happiness of the past in which it seems an instinct of our nature to indulge, and enable us to correct the exaggerated estimates of that school of philosophy which sees most to admire in society the further it recedes from civilization. I am enabled to furnish the reader with one of these chance glimpses.

An old man who died about ten years ago, has told me that, when a boy, he was sent on one occasion to the manse of a neighboring parish to bring back the horse of an elderly gentleman of the place, a retired officer, who had gone to visit the minister with the intention of remaining with him for a few days. The officer was a silver-headed, erect old man, who had served as an ensign at the battle of Blenheim, and who, when he had retired on half pay about forty years after, was still a poor lieutenant. His riding days were well-nigh over; and the boy overtook him long ere he had reached the manse, and just as he was joined by Mr. Forsyth, who had come riding up by a cross-road, and then slackened bridle to keep him company. They entered into conversation. Mr. Forsyth was curious in his inquiries, the old gentleman communicative, and the boy a good listener. The old man spoke much of the allied army under Marlborough. By far the strongest man in it, he said, was a gentleman from Ross-shire, Munro of Newmore. He had seen him raise a piece of ordnance to his breast which Mackenzie of Fairburn, another proprietor of the same district, had succeeded in raising to his knee, but which no other man among more than eighty