

family, where he got into an extensive business, having become contractor, almost on his own terms, for most of the public buildings, as well as for many gentlemen's houses, in the counties of Ross and Sutherland. All the churches and manse in Sutherland and Easter-Ross built between 1760 and 1804, were according to the plans, and were the workmanship of, James Boag. These plans were in almost all cases identical; that is, for churches, long, narrow buildings, much resembling granaries, in which convenience and acoustics were equally ignored. His manse we have already described in that of Kildonan. He built the church of Rosolis, in Mr. MacPhail's time, in 1767; and the church of Kildonan, during my father's incumbency, in 1788. When a school-boy at Dornoch I never could meet Boag, or even see him at a distance, without a feeling of terror. He lived mostly at Dornoch, but spent a considerable part of the year at Skelbo, which he held in lease. He terrified all the school-boys, as well as every inmate of his own house, by the violence of his temper and his readiness to take offence. His son-in-law, Mr. William Rose, was decidedly pious, as was also Mrs. Rose. After Dr. Bethune's death, she was one of several eminent Christians who petitioned the Marchioness of Stafford, as patron, in my favour. They were not successful, and I was utterly unworthy of such an honour; but it is a consolation to think that, although I did not thereby become minister of Dornoch, I was, notwithstanding, the choice of those who were owned and honoured of God. Mr. Rose died at an advanced age. He was one of the elders of the parish, and his Christian character may be summed in this, that he was distinguished for simplicity and fervour, "a good man, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost."

Two antiquated ladies lived in the town, Miss Betty Gordon and her elder sister Miss Anne. I mention the younger first, because the elder sister was always ailing, and seldom visible to the outdoor public. Miss Betty herself was too feeble to walk out, but she usually sat in the window in the afternoon, dressed after the fashion of 1699, in an ancient gown, with a shawl pinned over her shoulders, and a high cap as head gear. Like all females, perhaps, in the single state and of very advanced age, she was very fond of society, and of that light and easy conversation otherwise termed gossip. When therefore she took her station at her upper window, a female audience usually congregated below it. These attendants gave her the news of the day; and she made her remarks upon it, as full of charity and goodwill towards all as such remarks usually are. These two old ladies were as ancient in their descent as they were aged in years. Daughters of the laird of Embo, they could trace direct descent from the noble family of Huntly, through Adam, Lord of Aboyne. Their brother was the last laird in the direct line, and was the immediate predecessor of Robert Hume Gordon of Embo.

The public fairs of this little county town made a considerable stir. From the Ord Head to the Meikle Ferry, almost every man, woman, and child attended the Dornoch market. The market stance was the churchyard. Dornoch was what might strictly be called an Episcopalian town; and the consecrated environs of the Cathedral was just the

place which the men of those days would choose, either for burying their dead or holding their markets. The churchyard therefore became the only public square within the town. The evening previous to the market was a busy one. A long train of heavily-loaded carts might be seen wending their weary way into the town, more particularly from Tain, by the Meikle Ferry. The merchants' booths or tents were then set up, made of canvas stretched upon poles inserted several feet into the ground, even into graves and deep enough to reach the coffins. The fair commenced about twelve o'clock noon next day, and lasted for two days and a half. During its continuance, every sort of saleable article was bought and sold, whether of home or foreign manufacture. The first market at Dornoch that we attended took place six weeks after our arrival at the town. The bustle and variety of the scene very much impressed me. The master gave us holiday; and as my brother and I traversed the market-place, pence in hand, to make our purchases, all sorts of persons, articles, amusements, employments, sights and sounds, smote at once upon our eyes, our ears and our attention. Here we were pulled by the coat, and on turning round recognised, to our great joy, the cordial face of a Kildonan; there we noticed a hvy of young lasses, in best bib and tucker, accompanied by their bachelors, who treated them with ginger-bread, ribbons, and whisky. Next came a recruiting party, marching, with "galant step and slow," through the crowd, headed by the sergeant, sword in hand, and followed by the corporal and two or three privates, each with his weapon glancing in the sunlight. From one part of the crowd might be heard the loud laugh that bespoke the gay and jovial meeting of former acquaintance-ship, now again revived; from another the incessant shrill of little toy trumpets, which fond mothers had furnished to their younger children, and with which the little urchins kept up an unceasing clangour. At the fair of that day I, first of all, noticed the master perambulating the crowd, and looking at the merchants' booths with a countenance scarcely less rigid and commanding than that with which he was wont invariably to produce silence in the school.

Another incident of my school-boy days at Dornoch was a bloody fray which took place immediately after the burial of Miss Gray from Creich. The deceased was of the Sutherland Grays, who about the beginning of the last century, possessed property in the parishes of Creich, Lairg, Rogart, and Dornoch. She came down from London to the north of Scotland for change of air, being in a rapid decline, but did not survive her arrival at Creich longer than a month. Her remains were buried beside those of her ancestors in the Cathedral of Dornoch. The body was accompanied by an immense crowd, both of the gentry and peasantry. In the evening, after the burial, there was a dreadful fight. The parishioners of Dornoch and those of Creich quarrelled with each other, and fists, cudgels, stones, and other missiles were put in requisition. The leader of the Creich combatants was William Munro of Achany. I sat on a gravestone, at the gable of the ruined aisle of the cathedral, looking at the conflict. Broken heads, blood trickling over enraged faces, yells of rage, oaths and curses, are my reminiscences of the event. Dr. Bethune narrowly escaped broken