

## THE HIGHLAND KILT AND THE OLD IRISH DRESS.

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IF a new *Pseudodoria Epidemica* were to be written—and certainly such a work is not altogether unrequired, even at the present enlightened era—the kilt delusion should have a prominent place in it. A correspondent—SENEX—in vol. v., p. 167 of this *Journal*, inquires whether “Scottish antiquaries have been able to discover a period when the kilt was not worn by Highlanders?” Now, Scottish, as well as Irish, antiquaries have discovered so many very curious things, that it really would not be safe to say, without fear of contradiction, what they have or have not discovered. But it scarcely requires an antiquary to discover when the kilt was not worn by Highlanders.—SENEX himself, judging by his *nom de plume*—or, at any rate, that venerable and ubiquitous individual so generally known as the “oldest inhabitant,”—might almost remember the period in question. For, though it might not be quite prudent to hint at such a matter in the purlieus of the Canongate or the Candleriggs, the truth must be told here; and the simple fact is, that the kilt was *invented by an English tailor*, and the first person who wore it was an Englishman, so late as the year 1727. This may sound strange to some, but it is no less true; and, what is stranger still, Mr. Rawlinson, the English gentleman by whose directions the kilt was invented, and who first wore this article of dress (undress perhaps I should say), so associated in our minds with deeds of martial daring, was a peace-loving member of the Society of Friends!

The supposition of SENEX, that the old Irish and Highland costumes were identical, is, however, perfectly correct, as may be seen from the following authorities.

Lindsay, of Pitscottie, in his *Chronicles*, written about 1550, speaking of the Highlands, says they “are full of mountaines; and verie rude and homlie kynd of peple dothe inhabite, which is called the Reid-Shankis, or Wyld Scotcs. They be cloathed with ane mantle<sup>a</sup>, with ane schirt fashioned after the Irisch manner, going bair-legged to the knie.”

Nicholaye d’Arfreville, a French cosmographer, who accompanied James the Fifth of Scotland in his naval expedition to the Highlands and Western Islands, says of the natives:—“Ils portent, comme les Irlandois, une grande et ample chemise, safranée, et par dessus un habit long jusque à genoux de grosse laine, à mode d’une soutane.”<sup>b</sup>

With respect to saffron, I must here say a few words, before I proceed farther. Some doubts have been expressed\* as to the ancient Irish having used saffron—the produce of the autumnal cro-

<sup>a</sup> Blind Harry, the Minstrel, about 1470, when describing the quarrel between Selby, the son of the English constable of Dundee, and Wallace, represents Selby insulting Wallace, who was dressed as a Lowland gentleman, by saying that an Ersche—Irish or Highland—mantle would be his fittest attire.

“Thou Scot abyde,  
Quha Devill the graithis in so gay a guyde,  
Ane Ersche mantle it war the kynd to wer.”

<sup>b</sup> *La Navigation du Roy d’Ecosse Jacques V.* Paris, 1858.

\* *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, vol. 5, p. 258.

cus (*crocus sativus*)—as a dye-stuff. But there can be no doubt about the matter. And, as a collateral proof, I might adduce the very curious and rare poem, *Mayster Ion Gardener*, in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge—which, judging from its diction, cannot be of a later date than the end of the fourteenth century. In it, the author, after giving a general description

“Of all the herbys of Ierlond,”

goes at length into the mode of cultivation of the three most important, which are “wurtys” (cabbages), percel (parsley), and “safferowne;” and of the last, he says—

“Of safferowne we mote telle  
 He schul be kept fayre & well.  
 Safferowne wul have with out lesyng  
 Beddys ymade wel wyth dyng.  
 ffor sothe yf they schall bere,  
 The wolde be sette yn the moneth Septembre,  
 Three days before seynt Mary day natyvyté,  
 Othere the next weke ther after so mote y thee.  
 With a dybbel thu schalt ham sette,  
 That the dybbyl by fore be blunt & grete.  
 Thre ynchys depe they most sette be,  
 And thus seyde mayster Jon gardener to me.  
 To gadyr the safferowne, I schal thou say  
 Fro natyvyté to seynt Symonne & Jude is daye,  
 On what tyme of the day thou wolle,  
 Thou meighth hit bothe gadyr & pulle,  
 And so from day to day,  
 Tylle the tyme ben gone away,  
 And aftyr seynt Symonne & Jude is day  
 The kynde of blossom will gone away.”

The periods of planting and gathering prove that the “safferowne” of the poem was the saffron of the present day—the produce of the autumnal crocus.

Leslie, Bishop of Ross, in his work, “*De Origine, Moribus, et Rebus Gestis Scotorum*,” published in 1578, thus describes the Highland costume of the period:—

“Vestes ad necessitatem (erant enim ad bellum in primis accomodatæ) non ad ornamentum faciebant. Chlamydes enim gestabant unius formæ omnes et nobiles et plebei, nisi quod nobiles variegatis sibi magis placebant, et illas quidem demissas ac fluxas, sed in sinus tamen quosdam ubi volebant, decenter contractas. His solis noctu involuti suaviter dormiebant: habebant etiam cujusmodi Hibernenses et hodie sibi, villosas stragulas, alias ad iter, alias ad lectos accommodas. Reliqua

vero vestimenta erant, brevis ex lana tunicella, manicis inferiùs apertis, uti expeditiùs cum vellent jacula torquerent, ac femoralia simplicissima. Ex lino quoque amplissima indusia conficiebant, multis sinibus, largioribusque manicis foris ad genua usque negligentius fluentia : hæc potentiores croco, alii autem adipe quodam, quo ab omni sorde diutius manerent integra illinebant : assuafacere enim se perpetuis castrorum sudoribus consultissimum putabant."

The above quotation may be freely rendered as follows :—

"Their clothing, being chiefly suited for war, was made for use, and not for ornament. All—both the nobles and common people—wore mantles of the same kind (except that those of the nobles were variegated at pleasure), long, ample, and gathered into becoming folds : wrapped in these, without any other covering, they slept comfortably. They had also frieze rugs, such as are used by the Irish, which they not only wore on a journey, but also spread upon their beds. The rest of their garments were a most simple trowser ; a woollen jerkin, with sleeves open below, for the facility of casting darts ; and a very large linen tunic, gathered into numerous plaits, and having wide hanging sleeves descending to their knees. These the rich coloured with saffron, and others smeared with a certain grease, to preserve them longer amidst the toils and exercises of the camp, which they considered it of the utmost importance to practise continually."

The first garment here mentioned by Leslie is clearly the *breacan* or belted plaid, hereafter to be described. The second is the Irish mantle. The third the *trùis*, or brocches and stockings in one piece, worn both by Highland and Irish chieftains ; the epithet *simplicissima* denoting its closely-fitting character, in contra-distinction to the puffed and padded out trunk-hose worn by the English and Lowland Scotch of the period. The last—the tunic—is merely the long shirt, *leni-croich* of the Irish, under probably a more correct denomination.

The accurate and pains-taking Camden describes the Irish dress in almost the very same words as Leslie did the Highland costume. He says :—

"Indusiis utuntur lincis, et illis quidem amplissimis manicis largioribus, et ad genua usque fluentibus, quæ croco inficere solebant. Tunicellas habent laneas admodum breves, femoralia simplicissima et aretissima ; superinducunt autem lacernas sive saga villosa (Heteromallas Isidorus vocare videtur) limbo jubato, et eleganter variegato, quibus nocte involuti suaviter humi dormiunt."

Which may thus be rendered :—"They wear large linen tunics, with wide sleeves hanging down to their knees, which they generally dye with saffron ; short woollen jerkins ; a most simple and closely-fitting *trùis* ; and over these they cast their mantles or shaggy rugs (which Isidore seems to call *Heteromallæ*) fringed and elegantly variegated, in which they wrap themselves at night, and sleep soundly on the bare ground."

The word "variegated," in both of the preceding quotations, can apply only to a chequered cloth, worn by all the Celtic tribes, and such as we now term *tartan* ; though the word "tartan" was originally applied to the material of the cloth, and had no reference whatever to its colour.



IRISH & HIGHLAND COSTUMES, FROM MSS. & EARLY PRINTED BOOKS.

In another place, Camden alludes to the perfect identity of the Hebridean and Irish manners, language, and dress.<sup>c</sup>

Derrick, in his *Image of Ireland*, published in 1581, gives some most valuable and interesting wood-cuts, representing the Irish dress of the period, which, in the letter-press, he thus describes :

“ WITH jackettes long and large,  
 which shroud simplicitie,  
 Though spiteful dartes, which they do weare,  
 importe iniquitie.  
 Their shirtes be verie straunge,  
 not reachinge past the thic ;  
 With pleates on pleates, thei pleated are,  
 as thick as pleates may lye ;  
 Whose sleeves hang trailing downe  
 almost unto the shoe,  
 And with a mantle comonlie,  
 the Irish Karne doe goe.  
 Now some amongst the rest  
 do use another weed,  
 A coate, I meane, of straunge device,  
 which fancie first did breed.  
 His skirts be very shorte,  
 with pleates set thicke abowte ;  
 And Irish trouzes moe to put  
 their straunge protactours out.”

Sir Walter Scott, who edited Lord Somers's tracts, in a note to the last six lines above, says :—  
 “ This sort of dress, with plaited skirts, and long trowsers made tight to the body, was precisely that of a Highland gentleman—the plaid coming in place of the mantle.”

The figures, 1 and 2, in the accompanying plate, taken from a very rare, (I believe, unique) engraving of Irish costume, purporting to be “DRAWN AFTER THE QVICKE,” and preserved in the Douce collection, in the Bodleian Library—exhibit the plaited shirts, “whose sleeves hang trailing down;” the short-waisted jerkin, with “pleates set thick about” the middle. In it we see also the formidable “skene,” and the peculiarly shaped swords, like those on the tombs of Irish Kings, as represented by Walker. Again, in figure 3, representing O'More, an Irish chief, in 1600, from a MS. in Trinity College, Dublin, we see the “*femoralia simplicissima et arcissima*” of Camden,

<sup>c</sup> Quod vero ad mores, cultum, et linguam spectat, a silvestribus illis Hibernicis, de quibus egimus, ne tantillum discrepant ut facile unam eadem esse gentem cognoscamus.

the "Irish trouzes" of Derrick. Figure 4 is from Derrick, and represents "Donolle Obreane," an Irish agent employed by the government to negotiate with insurgent chiefs. He is in the act of receiving a letter from the hand of Lord Deputy Sir Henry Sidney, who is on horseback. Figure 5 is from the same work, and represents a "Kerne," clothed in a mantle, driving off a herd of cattle after a successful foray on the English pale.

Neither the *trúis* nor the long, thickly-plaited shirt, or rather tunic, with hanging sleeves—an elegant and picturesque dress by the way—were peculiarly Irish; the first having formed a portion of the original Gaulish and British dress, and the second being a general European fashion, about the close of the fourteenth century, previous to the use of the doublet and hose; and which might have reached Ireland, through France or Spain, or have been adopted from the English in the reign of the second Richard. Moreover, those dresses were worn only by the chiefs; the lower classes wearing the mantle only, which, in its rudest form, was merely a piece of cloth thrown over the shoulders, and fastened in front with one or two skewers. It was, as Spencer says:—"Their house, their tent, their couch, their target. In summer, they could wear it loose; in winter, wrap it close; at all times use it, never heavy, never cumbersome." When used as a target, it was taken off and wrapped round the left arm, for, like all the other varieties of the Celtic race, the Irish fought naked. And the mantle could be used as an offensive, as well as a defensive, weapon. With a stone in it, a blow could be delivered, heavy enough to fall an ox.

"Thrs monster sprung from Laughlin Crone,  
A greater thief was never known;  
For, in his trade, he had such skill,  
That he a stolen cow could kill,  
For shift, with mantle and a stone,  
A way to other thieves unknown."<sup>d</sup>

But, even so late as the close of the sixteenth century, when Moryson wrote, in the remoter parts of Ireland, where English laws and manners were unknown, the slight covering of the mantle was generally dispensed with. In the reign of Henry the Eighth, the long shirt was proscribed by law, and other innovations soon followed; for Campion, writing in 1571, says:—"They have now left their saffron, and learne to wash their shirts foure or five times in a year." When Moryson wrote, the long shirt had completely fallen into disuse. About the same time, too, it fell into disuse in the Highlands—the chiefs wearing, as in Ireland, the *trúis* and mantle, or plaid; and the inferior ranks wearing, as their sole article of dress, an exaggerated form of the mantle, partly combined with the plaits of the long shirt, termed by Highlanders, the *breacon feile*, by Lowlanders, "the belted-plaid."<sup>e</sup>

<sup>d</sup> *The History of Ireland in verse.* Dublin.

<sup>e</sup> From the Saxon *plat*, a curtain—a plain, flat, piece of cloth, not "made up" into a garment. *Plain, flat, plate,*

are derived from the same source; and in many languages, the modifications of the same word mean anything broad and flat.

The *braacan feile*—literally the chequered covering—merely consisted of a plain piece of cloth, two yards in width, and from four to six in length. As much in depth of the centre of one end as would reach from the loin to the knee, and in breadth as would reach from side to side round the back, was carefully folded into plaits, leaving unplaited at each extremity as much as would cover the front of the body, overlapping from side to side. Thus prepared, the plaid was firmly bound round the body by a leathern belt in such manner that the lower end came down to the knee-joint; and, while the cloth behind was single and plaited, that in front was plain and doubled. The rest of the plaid was wrapped round the upper part of the body in various ways, according to the weather or the caprice of the wearer. Generally it led up over the shoulders, and fastened in front by a skewer; and in this guise the wearer, seen from behind, looked exactly like a female in a very short petticoat, who had thrown the skirt of her gown over her head to protect her bonnet from rain. The plaits, not being permanent folds sewn in the plaid, required to be made every time the garment was put on; and the more in number and neater they were, the Highlander exquisite considered himself the better dressed. To put on the garment properly an assistant was required to hold up the ready-plaited plaid, while the other belted it round his own body. But, in an emergency, a Highlander, by first placing his belt on the ground, and over it the prepared plaid, could, by lying down and buckling it around him, put it on without assistance.

Captain Burt, in his *Letters from a Gentleman in the North of Scotland*, written about 1730, thus describes the belted-plaid:—"A small part of the plaid is set in folds, and girt round the waist, to make of it a short petticoat, which reaches half-way down the thigh; and the rest is brought over the shoulders, and then fastened before, below the neck—often with a fork, and sometimes with a bodkin, or sharpened piece of stick; so that they make pretty near the appearance of the people in London, when they bring their gowns over their heads to shelter them from the rain." Figure 6 represents a Highlander, wearing the belted-plaid, from an illustration in Burt's work.

"The belted plaid," says a writer in the first volume of the *Quarterly Review*, "was precisely the dress of a savage, who, finding a web of cloth that he had not skill to frame into a garment, wrapt one end round his middle, and threw the rest about his shoulders. This dress was abundantly inconvenient; for the upper part of the plaid was only useful in rain, or for a cover at night, while the lower extremity was essential to decency. It was, in short, as if a man's great coat was fastened to his breeches; and, in exertions of war or the chase, all was necessarily thrown away together. And it is little to the honour of Highland ingenuity that, although the chiefs, to avoid this dilemma, wore long pantaloons called trews, the common Gael never fell upon any substitute for the belted plaid, till an Englishman, for the benefit of the labourers who worked under his direction, invented the *feile beg*, or "little petticoat."

There can be no doubt of the high antiquity of the belted-plaid; no other kind of dress answers so well to the "garment" of Scripture, either when spoken of literally or metaphorically. In it

the Highlanders, as well as the Israelites, with their loins girded, have carried their kneading-troughs "bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders." And the Arabic *haik* <sup>1</sup> still worn in Morocco—that corner of the earth which has been so aptly described as "the nook in the ocean of time, where the wrecks of all ages are cast up"—differs with respect to form in nothing from the belted-plaid.

Like the Spanish fleet that could not be seen, because it was not in sight, neither Camden, Leslie, Lindsay, Derrick, nor d'Arleville, in the foregoing notices of Highland (and what was the same thing, Irish) costume, mention the *kilt*, simply because it was not then known. Descending the stream of time, we find that Taylor, the water-poet, who made his *Penniless Pilgrimage* to Scotland in 1618, saw a

"Martiall meeting in the Brea of Mar,  
How thousand gallant spirits come neere and farr,  
With swords and targets, arrows, bows, and gunns."

This was one of the grand Highland hunting-matches of the olden time. On this occasion Taylor, to be like the rest, wore the Highland dress, which he minutely describes, but says nothing whatever about a kilt. Neither does Gordon of Stralock<sup>2</sup>—himself a Highland chief—who described the dress of his countrymen in 1641. Later still, Colonel Clelland thus describes the "Highland Host"—a party of 6,000 mountaineers brought down to coerce and spoil the covenanting Whigs of the western shires of Scotland, in 1678—without ever alluding to the kilt:—

"Their head, their neck, their leggs and thighs,  
Are influenced by the skies.  
Without a clout to interrupt them,  
They need not strip them when they whip them,  
Nor loose their doublet when they're hanged.  
It's marvellous how in such weather  
O'er hill and hop they come together,  
How in such stormes they come so farr;  
The reason is they're smeared with tar,<sup>3</sup>  
Which doth defend them heel and neck,  
Just as it doth their sheep protect."

Those were the common rabble. Their officers, however, were better dressed, and wore the *truis*.

"But those who were the chief commanders,  
As such who bore the pirnie<sup>4</sup> standarts ;

<sup>1</sup> *Haik*, literally, the thing that is woven—the web.  
<sup>2</sup> *History of Scots Affairs*. Spalding Club. Aberdeen. 1841.

<sup>3</sup> Major, writing in 1518, says that the Highlanders then daubed their clothes with pitch.

<sup>4</sup> Parti-coloured.

Who led the van, and drove the rear,  
 Were right well mounted of their gear.  
 With brogues, trues, and pinnie plaids,  
 With good blue bonnets on their heads,  
 Which, on the one side, had a fiipe,  
 Adorned with a tobacco-pipe,  
 With durk, and snap-work,<sup>j</sup> and snuff-mill,  
 A bagg which they with onions fill;  
 And as their strick observers say,  
 A tup's horn filled with usquebay."<sup>k</sup>

In fact, there is neither literary notice nor pictorial representation of the kilt, previous to an advanced period in the last century. The frontispiece of a work entitled *The Scotch Rogue, or the Life and Actions of Donald Mac Donald, a Highland Scot*, published at London, in 1706, represents a Highlander, but he has no kilt. He wears the *truis*; his tobacco-pipe is stuck in his cap, his pistols in his belt, his plaid is thrown off, ready for action; he holds his sword and target in an attitude of attack; and underneath is the following doggerel:—

“ Thus armed, to no man will I turn my back,  
 But take from others whatso'er I lack;  
 ‘Stand, and deliver,’ is the word I use,  
 And, at their perils, men must me refuse.”

But there is no burlesque, no exaggeration in the design. It is really a correct and careful representation of the costume of a Highland gentleman of the period.

The *Theatrum Scotia*,<sup>l</sup> published in 1718, contains about sixty copper-plate engravings of places in Scotland, taken from drawings made about 1695, by Captain Slezzer, an able Dutch officer of artillery, in the service of William III. The artist evidently had in view, not only to give correct delineations of the places drawn, but also of the costumes, field-sports, agriculture, manners, and customs of the Scottish people. He shows us the noble in his embroidered coat and flowing peruke; the beggar fluttering in rags; the soldier in uniform; the servant in livery; the collegian in his gown; the Highlander in the belted-plaid and *truis*; but in the whole sixty engravings, there cannot be found a single *kilt*—a negative but most conclusive evidence that it was not known, nor used at the period.

The earliest portrait of a Highland chieftain, in which the kilt is represented, was painted in 1746, and is in the possession of the family of Glengarry, of Inveree. It represents Alexander

<sup>j</sup> Snap-hand-pistol.

<sup>k</sup> A Collection of several Poems. 1697.

<sup>l</sup> *Theatrum Scotia: Containing the Prospects of his Majesty's Castles and Palaces: Together with those of the most*

*considerable Towns and Colleges: The Ruins of many Ancient Monasteries and Convents within the said Kingdom. All curiously engraven on Copper Plates. London. 1718.*

Mac Donnell, of Glengarry, a captain of the Royal Scots regiment, in the French service, and his henchman; the latter alone wears the kilt. And it is a curious circumstance, that this Alexander was the eldest son of John Mac Donnell, *the first Highlander who wore a kilt.*

Nor did the Highland gentlemen of the latter part of the last century wear the kilt; they well knew its modern and servile origin, and despised it accordingly. Mrs. Grant, of Laggan, tells us, that her brother-in-law, Major Grant, was considered to be the best dressed Highlander of his day, and he invariably wore the *truis*. Sir John Sinclair, as patriotic a Highlander as ever lived, attended the court of George III. wearing the *truis*, as the ancient and characteristic dress of his country.

Prince Charles Edward, to flatter the prejudices of his Gaelic followers, generally wore the belted-plaid and *truis* in 1745-6; but we never hear of him wearing the kilt. He wore the plaid and *truis* on the romantic march to Derby; and it was in the same dress he finally made his escape from Scotland. A letter in the *Stuart Papers* (dated Morlaix, September 29, 1746), written by Colonel Warren to Waters, the Parisian banker, states that the Prince, when he embarked, was dressed in "a short coat of coarse black frieze, tartan trews, and over them a belted-plaid." The medal, struck to commemorate his arrival in Scotland, in 1745, represents him dressed in the belted-plaid alone, without the *truis*. Figure 7 is the representation of the Prince from this medal, the original die of which is in the possession of a gentleman in Glasgow.

Work, the great prime mover—at once the cause and the effect of civilization—led the way to the invention of the kilt. In or about 1727, a Liverpool company, attracted by the mineral resources of the district, and the abundant supply of fuel afforded by the natural birch-woods of Glengarry, founded an establishment for smelting ore, near the bridge of Garry; and cut a small canal from Loich Oich to Loch Lochie, to facilitate the conveyance of the metal to the sea. It was at this time that the hitherto invincible repugnance of the male Highlanders to any kind of manual labour, was first overcome by the direst necessity, caused by the impoverishing oppression exercised by the army of occupation, under General Wade. So, a number of Highlanders were employed by the English company; but those men, unable to move their limbs when swathed in the many folds of the belted-plaid, threw off their plaids, their only article of dress, and worked *in puris*



FIG. 7.

*naturalibus*. Rawlinson, the manager of the works (and as I have already observed, an Englishman, and member of the Society of Friends) was distressed and disgusted by seeing himself daily surrounded by naked men, but could find no help for it. The manager resided about half-way between Inverness and Maryburgh, both places being then garrisoned by Wade's soldiers. One evening, an English army-tailor, named Parkinson—who had just arrived from London, on business connected with clothing the troops—when passing between the two garrisons was caught in a storm, and took shelter in Rawlinson's house. After the first greetings, the tailor, being unacquainted with the customs of the country, expressed surprise that a Highlander, who had also sought shelter, did not put off his wet cloak. Rawlinson shocked his guest by replying that the Highlander's cloak—in reality a belted-plaid—was the only garment he had on; that if he was in his own hut, amongst his own family, he would take it off *instantly*; but, in deference to certain Southern prejudices, he kept it on in an Englishman's house. Rawlinson further stated how greatly he was shocked by seeing the naked Highlanders at work, and entreated Parkinson's professional assistance towards devising a new garb for them, in which they could work without outraging decency. The problem to be solved was to make a dress, not higher in price than the belted-plaid, that would retain the plaits so prized by the Highland dandy, and that would admit of the free use of the limbs when at work. The tailor solved the problem with his shears. He cut off the lower part of the plaid that belted round the loins, and formed permanent plaits in it with the needle;—and lo, the kilt!—while the upper part, forming the shoulder-plaid, could be fastened round the shoulders, as before, in severe weather, or when the wearer was not working. Rawlinson, to set an example to his workmen, nobly stifled the peculiar notions of his sect, and was the first man to wear the kilt. The Highlanders at first looked coldly on it; but the chief of Glengarry<sup>m</sup> adopting the novel garment, the kilt soon became general in the district, and from thence spread to other parts of the Highlands. However, the belted plaid survived the period when the Highland dress was interdicted by law (from 1747 to 1782), and was worn by shepherds till the close of the last century, and known by its original name of *breacon feile*; while to the kilt was given the name *feile beg*—the little covering; and the shoulder-plaid was termed *am feile mòr*—the greater covering.<sup>n</sup>

But the Highlanders, if they did not work, fought, and fought well, too, as they still do: how, then, did they fight in that awkward, cumbersome garment, the belted-plaid? The answer is simply this,—they did not fight in it at all, but threw it off, and fought in the true Celtic fashion.

<sup>m</sup> John Mac Alester, Mac Ranald Mac Donnell, chieftain of Glengarry, and the first Highlander who wore a kilt, was alive in 1745, but too old and feeble to lead out his clan. His eldest son, Alexander, whose portrait is alluded to in the text, being, at the same time, a prisoner in the Tower of London; the clan was headed by Eneas, his second son.

<sup>n</sup> Stuart's *Costume of the Clans*. Edinburgh. 1845. Burt's *Letters from the Highlands*. London. 1759. Sir John Sinclair in Pinkerton's *Literary Correspondence*. London. 1830. Mac Culloch's *Highland and Western Islands*. London. 1824.

The old ballad of the *Battle of the Brig of Dee* is literally correct:—

“ The Highlanders are pretty men  
For target and claymore;  
But yet they are but naked men  
To face the cannon’s roar.”

And another ballad, or probably a more ancient version of the same, says—

“ The Highlandmen are clever men at handling sword and bow,  
But yet they are ow’r naked men to bide the gun I trow.”

At Killiecrankie, the Highlanders fought naked. And, as long as “Evan Donald’s fame rings in each clansman’s ears,” the traditionary story will be proudly told that, when the Camerons had dropped their plaids, and were about to “descend to the harvest of death” in the pass of Killiecrankie, Lochiel, perceiving that the only article of attire, saving their “bonnets,” worn by himself and all the clan, were *his own brogues*, he flung them off, scorning to retain even that slight advantage over his naked clansmen.

At Sheriffmuir, in 1715, the Highlanders fought naked. A MS. relation of that battle accounts for the greater proportionate mortality amongst the wounded Highlandmen than their officers, by stating that, during the cold night which followed the battle, the officers wearing the *truis* had some protection; whereas, the common men, who had thrown off their plaids on going into action, were completely exposed to the piercing frost.

That extraordinary romance of military history—the mutiny of Sempill’s Highland regiment, in 1743—proves that the Highlanders had then no predilection for the kilt. Disappearing in one night, marching for five successive nights, and taking up strong positions during the day, this regiment reached as far as Northamptonshire, in their attempt to force their way from London back to the Highlands. And one of their principal grievances was, that they were compelled to wear the kilt. “If,” said they to the authorities, “you consider us to be soldiers, amenable to military discipline, and liable to serve wherever you may please to send us, why not dress us as you dress your soldiers—not as you dress your women?”

The gallant conduct of the Highlanders at Fontenoy gave the kilt a *prestige* that it has never since lost. The numberless valiant achievements of the same troops added to its fame. So, when George the Fourth visited Scotland, and wore the kilt on his own royal limbs, its short-lived existence and plebeian origin became almost forgotten. Then the manufacturers—cunning fellows—discovered the ancient distinctive tartans of each clan; though the looms in which alone such intricate patterns could be woven were modern inventions, and the ancient Highlanders could no more have produced such patterns than they could have made point-lace or printed calico.<sup>p</sup> Then

<sup>p</sup> There were anciently some few varieties of the tartan worn by the chiefs, as Leslie informs us; but those arose from local circumstances, and were not separate clan badges.

Monipennie, in 1612, tells that the prevailing colour of the cloth worn by the Highlanders was brown, and so it was in 1715.

the brothers Hay Allan, pretending to be legitimate grandsons of the last Pretender, and respectively entitling themselves John Sobieski Stolberg Stuart, and Charles Edward Stuart, published a *Vestiarium Scoticum* from a pretended manuscript, invisible to all the world save their own fertile imaginations. But the pseudo-Stuarts overdid the matter, by giving distinctive tartans to Lowland and Border families. Whereat Sir Walter Scott—though he laughed in his sleeve when he saw the Fourth George and Alderman Curtis arrayed in kilts—exclaimed:—"If there should ever be another rising, the national Scottish air cannot be *Hey tuttie tattie*, but *the Devil among the tailors*."

To conclude, I must observe that the cap, the ostrich feathers, the coatee, the kilt, the stockings, the shoes, the great coat—(a Highlander in a great coat!)—now worn by the so-called Highland regiments, are no more part or parcel of the ancient Highland dress, than the many brave Lowlanders and Ulster-men who serve in those regiments are Highlanders by birth.

WILLIAM PINKERTON.

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## THE FRENCH SETTLERS IN IRELAND—No. 8.

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### THE HUGUENOT COLONY OF PORTARLINGTON,

(Continued from vol. 3, page 231.)

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By SIR ERASMUS D. BORROWES, BART.

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"THE thousands that, unsung by praise,  
Have made an offering of their days,  
For truth—for heaven—for freedom's sake  
Resigned the bitter cup to take;  
And silently, in fearless faith,  
Bowing their noble souls to death."

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In resuming our sketch of the Huguenots of Portarlington, the memory of their sorrows, sufferings, and self-denial, brings with it a feeling of painful regret—brightened, however, by admiration of their unshaken constancy, and gallant bearing in each hour of trial, and of the many virtues which shed a halo on their domestic hearths and public citizenship, when the strife was over. Their sylvan retreat on the placid waters of the Barrow, with its new and busy occupations, had softened their troubles; and the right hand of fellowship had been extended to welcome their advent, and to aid their dexterous and tasteful efforts in planting their new colony. Having