

2d, *Researches in regard to the vitrified forts of Ross-shire, and other stations connected with them, where melted matter does not appear.* By Sir George Mackenzie, Baronet, &c. Contained in a Letter to Dr Hibbert, dated Coul, 1st September 1825.

MY DEAR SIR,—I now sit down to give you an account of some farther researches in regard to the vitrified forts, and other stations connected with them, where melted matter does not appear.

I went, as I mentioned in my last I should, to Loch Alsh, and intended to proceed to Kintail; but the weather unfortunately became bad, and my time was limited. I was told, however, that in a moss on the hill above Balmacarra House, there was a hillock on which melted matter had been seen. This I visited, with strong hopes, you may believe, but was disappointed on finding only a heap of loose stones of small size, without a vestige of rampart, or any thing indicating a place of defence or a signal station. It appeared to me that the moss had been a lake, and this heap an island in it.

An excursion up Strathglass from Bealey, to see the chain connected with Dun Fion, was attended with more satisfaction. You may follow me on the map.

In my letter to Sir Walter Scott, I mentioned that Mr Fraser had found a fortification on a hill I pointed out to him from Dun Fion. From this there are two seen, one above Erchless Castle, which is likewise seen from Dun Kliavan, above Kilmoraick. Below this, near Strowey Inn, is a circular Dun; but from its being quite circular, from few stones being in the rampart, and the hill on which it is placed being low and not defensible, I considered it different from the other Duns; and in this I was confirmed by the Gaelic name given to it by the old inn-keeper, which signified the hill where the courts of justice were held.

There is one in a very strong position on the hill on one side of which begins Glen Strathfarren, and on the other Strath Glass. There is a short way up this last strath, and at a little distance from the one on the hill, a small rock standing very conspicuously above Little Strowey, which has been pretty strongly fortified. These two, as well as the one above Erchless, are connected with one on the opposite side of the strath, farther up; but not having a guide, I did not find it, though it was described to me by Mr Fraser, factor to Mr Fraser of Lovat. This is in sight of Knockfin, on which there is a fort, of a structure somewhat different from the others. The rampart does not touch the slope of the hill, being fifteen or twenty yards from it. There appears to have been an inner inclosure; but we cannot always judge well, on ac-

count of the complete demolition of the structures, which, as I have observed to Sir Walter Scott, seems to have been effected by some wise invader. The oftener I contemplate them, the more I am persuaded of the whole of them having been thrown down.

Farther up the strath, about half a mile beyond the house of Guisecham, is a hill, not very strong in itself, on which there are abundant traces of ramparts; and this is seen from Knockfin. Here my researches ended, but I think it very probable that the chain goes on to Kintail in this direction. It is something to have traced it half way.