

ing the whole way, and at the "March" * stopping to drink to our health and asking us to come again whenever we liked, and giving a regular Highland cheer in Highland fashion, returned by our men, the pipers playing, and all, all so gay, so bright! And I so eager for next year's expeditions, which I ought not to have been! Oh! how little we know what is before us! How uncertain is life! I felt very sad, but was so much occupied with the poor Duke,† for whom I truly grieve, that I did not feel the trial of returning to *Blair* in such terribly altered circumstances, as I should otherwise have done.

At *Stanley Junction* we joined the others, and proceeded as usual to *Aboyne*, whence we drove in open carriages—Lenchen, Alfred, and Baby with me—and reached *Balmoral* at twenty minutes past six. It was very cold. Bertie and Alix were at the door, and stayed a little while afterwards. How strange they should be at *Abergeldie*! A few years ago dear Mama used to receive us.

* The boundary of the Duke's property. "March" is the word commonly used in Scotland to express the outer limit or boundary of land.

† He died in the following year, January 16, 1864.