

SUNBEAM

Vol. XXVI.

TORONTO, OCTOBER 14, 1905.

No. 21.

IONA, STAFFA, AND FINGAL'S CAVE.

BY THE EDITOR.

The south-western isles of Scotland present some of the finest scenery and most interesting associations of any part of Great Britain. The steamer "Iona" leaves the busy quay of the Broomielaw at Glasgow, and glides down the river Clyde, through the crowded shipping from every land which throngs the busy port. On the south shore we pass the little hamlet of Kilmartin, the reputed birthplace of the patron saint of Ireland. According to legend, the holy man was so beset by the minions of Satan, that he fled in a small boat to the Isle of Saints. Satan, enraged at his escape, seized a huge boulder and flung it after the fugitive. If you presume to doubt the story, you are shown the identical stone, Dumbarton Castle, crowned with its lofty castle, 550 feet in height. To the left is the port of Greenock, in whose quiet "God's-acre" sleeps the dust of Highland Mary," the object of Burns' purest and most fervent love, and the subject of his most tender and touching ballad.

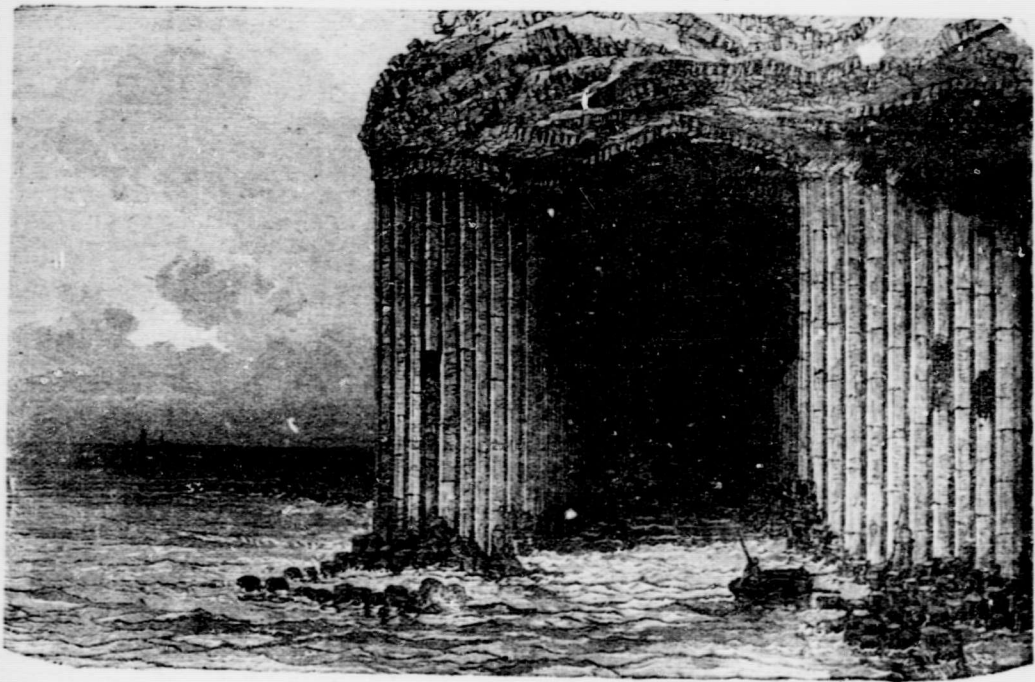
We enter now the winding channel of the Kyles of Bute, the sea rising abruptly from the sea, like a locked lake. Crossing Loch Fyne, we enter Crinan Canal, which saves a detour of seventy miles around the Mull of Gaire, and threading the Jura Sound, between magnificent cliffs and crags, we slide into the beautiful "White Bay" Oban.

From Oban, a staunch little seaworthy cutter—for the passage is often very rough—conveys one around the rugged coast of Mull, calling at Iona's holy isle,

and at the marvellous cave of Staffa. The island of Iona—Isle of the Waves, or Icolmkill, the Isle of St. Columba's cell—is very small, only two miles and a half in length, by one in breadth—but here burned for long ages the beacon fires of the Christian faith, when pagan darkness enveloped all around.

Among the wild mountains of Donegal, in Ireland, early in the sixth century,

osier boats, he reached Iona's lonely isle, amid the surges of the melancholy main. Here he reared his monasteries of wattled huts; his chapel, refectory, cow byres, and grange. The bare ground was their bed, and a stone their pillow. The sea-girt isle became a distinguished seat of learning and piety—a moral lighthouse, sending forth rays of spiritual illumination amid the dense heathen darkness all



FINGAL'S CAVE, STAFFA.

was born a child of royal race, destined to become famous throughout the world as the Apostle of Christianity to Scotland, and the patron saint of that land, till he was superseded by St. Andrew. This boy was Colum, or Columba, who in his youth had a passion for borrowing from the convent founded by St. Patrick, and copying, manuscripts of the Gospel and Psalms. When grown to man's estates, in fulfilment of a vow, he became a missionary to the pagan Picts and Scots. With twelve companions, in skin-covered

around. Much time was spent by the monks in the study of the Greek and Latin tongues, and in the transcription of MS. copies of the Scriptures.

The pious Culdees, as these missionaries were called, in their frail osier barks, penetrated the numerous gulfs and straits of that storm-lashed coast. They carried the Gospel to the far-off steeps of St. Kilda; to the Orkney, Shetland, and Farse Islands; and even to

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