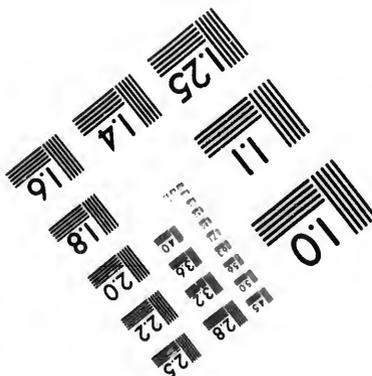
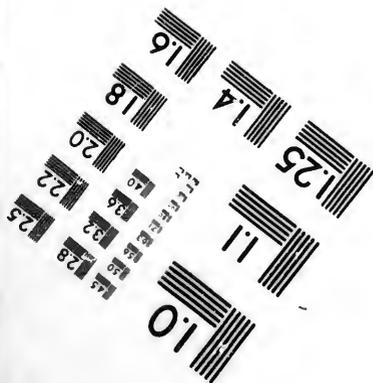
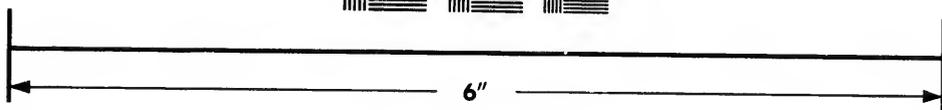
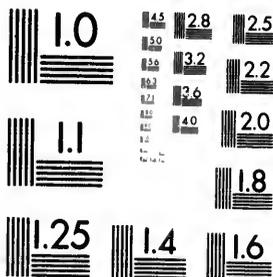


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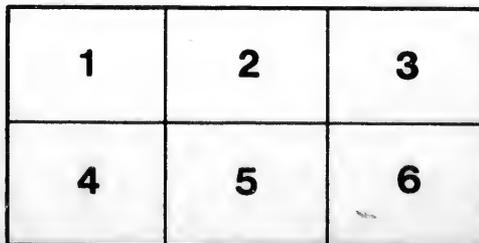
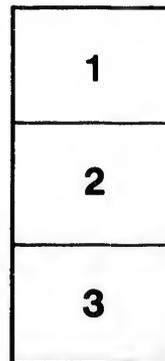
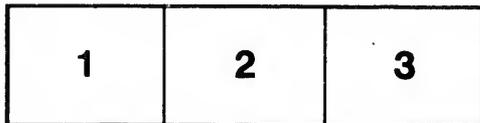
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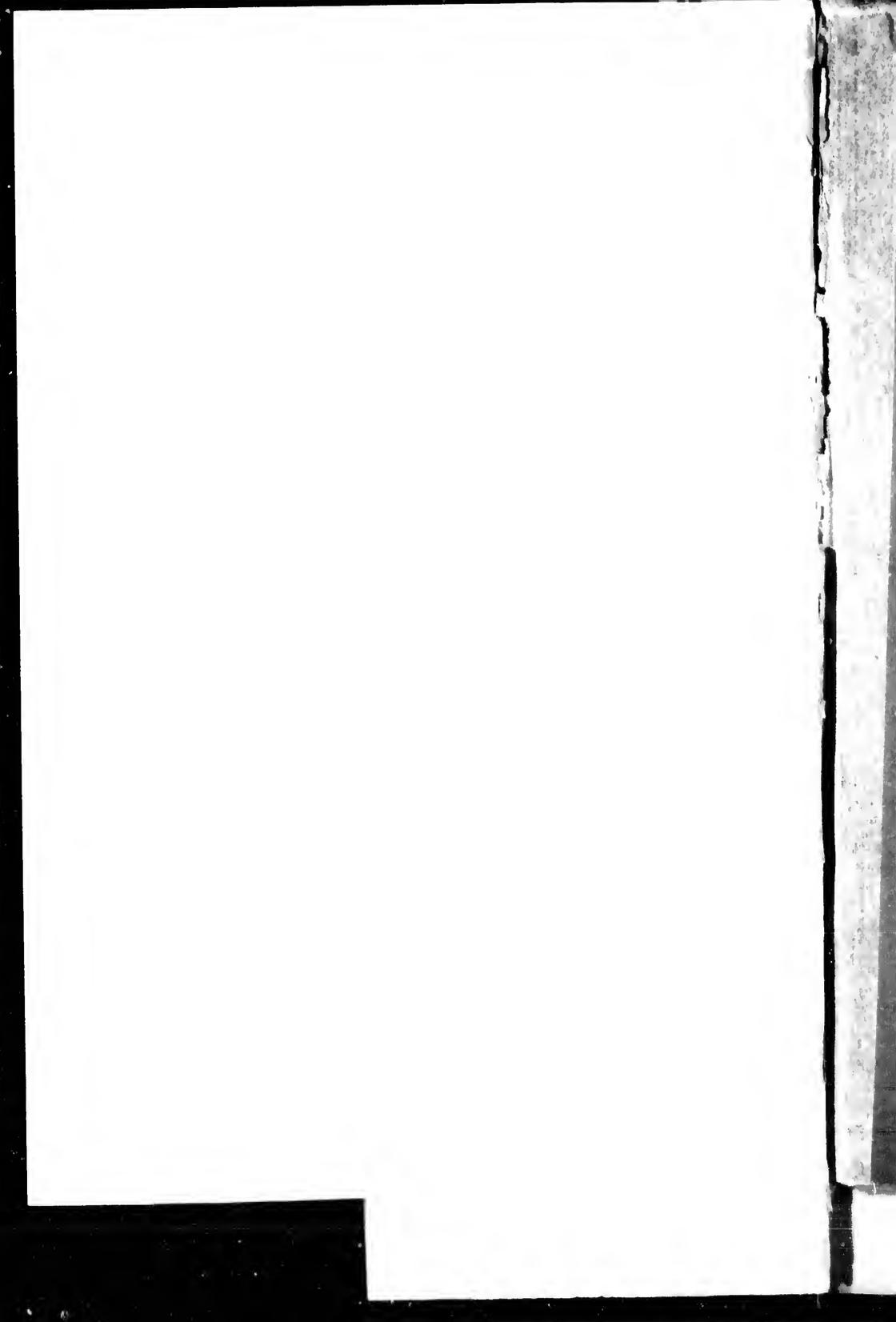
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LAST ATTEMPT
OF THE
CATERAN
TO LEVY
BLACKMAIL IN SCOTLAND,

BEING A LETTER TO THE WHITBY CHRONICLE, ONTARIO;
CONTAINING A CIRCUMSTANTIAL ACCOUNT OF
THE LAST RAID ON THE LOWLANDS
OF SCOTLAND, IN 1707.

BY Wm. GORDON, OF BAYSIDE.

WHITBY, ONT.

PRINTED BY W. H. HIGGINS, AT THE CHRONICLE OFFICE, BROCK STREET.

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THE LAST RAID OF THE CATERAN.

[To our Scotch readers, especially, the following story of The Last Raid of the Cateran must prove highly interesting. It is from the pen of an occasional correspondent—a gentleman long well known in this community, and widely respected wherever his name is known. Although the story has been frequently told, and given to the public through the Scottish press, as also, sometime since, in the *Scottish American Journal*, all have failed in accuracy of detail; and our correspondent, being now probably the last of living men in possession of the true version, has been obliging enough to write it for these columns.]

To the Editor of the Whilby Chronicle.

DEAR SIR,—

Since the great majority of our printed periodicals, whether political, moral, or religious, have now their stories; and however excellent the publication may otherwise be, if it have no story, it is set down by the many as being of little account; one is, therefore, almost induced to believe that he now lives in story-telling times. But so far from my presuming to find fault with either the taste of the great mass of the reading public, on this score, or with those who cater for their entertainment in this special department of literature, I, too, would follow suit by furnishing a story. With this difference, however, that while most of the stories which find ready acceptance with the public—their heroes, heroines, incidents, &c., never had an existence, otherwise than in the imagination of their authors—mine is veritable throughout. It is true, it belongs to the olden times, being an account of the last attempt made by the Cateran to levy blackmail on the Lowlanders of Scotland, in the year 1707. But as the affair in question has never had, as yet, a place assigned to it in the page of history, and having acquired my information, bordering on sixty years since, through a sure channel from the sons of fathers who mingled in the bloody strife, I am enabled to give you the authentic details of that romantic adventure, with all the freshness of a recent event. But before I enter on a description of the raid, perhaps it will afford some interest to a part of the many readers of the CHRONICLE, to first glance at the curious and out-of-the-way causes which produced the commencement of the black-mal levying visitations, from

time to time inflicted on the Lowlanders of Scotland, and continued during a period exceeding three hundred years; and in course of which crimes of the deepest dye were frequently committed by a class of men who were never known to drop the tear of pity over those their cruel and exacting avarice had made widows and fatherless children.

As a part of the legacy which the eventful battle of Hastings conferred on the country, north of the tweed, in less than two centuries thereafter the ancient Celtic had to give place to a dialect of the Saxon, which became the living language of the people, all south of the Grampians. But the Highlanders being, then as now, greatly in love with their Gaelic, and confidently believing that it was in it and in no other that our first parents had chatted to each other in Paradise, they consequently looked upon the newly imported Saxon jargon with abhorrence, and no longer viewed the Lowlanders as brethren descended from the same pure unadulterated stock and lineage with themselves; but a mongrel people, alien in blood and in language, and with whom no friendly intercourse should be held. If this had been all, probably no great harm would have followed; but by a most unconscious perversion of common sense justice, many of the Highlanders set up a claim of right to levy black-mail on the Lowlanders; for the exceedingly frivolous reason that, in their estimation, their Lowland neighbors and fellow subjects were no better than the *Sassanaeh* or the *Southern*, a term which they had long held in contumely; and previous to the introduction of the new language, had been exclusively applied to the English as hereditary enemies. Hence the origin of the formation of powerful bands of banditti, who were called "Oateran," (a Gaelic name, meaning hill-robbers.) They became an organized body by electing a chief of their own, to whom they acknowledged a petty allegiance, and, as often as cupidity prompted, or opportunity favored, they, under his leading, made sudden raids into the Lowlands, and there seized by violence whatever property their eyes and hearts coveted; and, before the slow arm of legal justice could overtake them, had hurried back with their booty into the remote fastnesses of the hills, where the neighboring Clans gave them indirect protection, and who were believed not to be always a disinterested party when a division and an appropriation of the plunder took place.

Strange to say, the most cruel and oppressive of all those raiding Chiefs which history takes notice of, was Alexander, Earl of Buchan, a son of Robert II., to whom the people gave the appropriate name of the "Wolfe of Badenoch." Irrespective of his blood-stained raids

into the Lowlands, in the year 1389. that madcap burned the town of Forres, and in the following year, having had a squabble with the Bishop, he also burned the cathedral of Elgin, esteemed the most beautiful building of its kind in Scotland. Having alike defied the power of his father's government to arrest and bring him to justice, and what was then far more terrible, the excommunication of the Pope (Clement VII.,) death alone put an end to his savage career. The Wolfe of Badenoch had a son, who, in the opening years of his manhood, bade fair to equal his father's ferocity of character, but in after life turned over a new leaf, and became one of the most honorable distinguished collateral branches of the House, of Stuart—conducted a powerful raid into Forfarshire, and while there carrying on the usual work of murdering and plundering the unoffending inhabitants, he was unsuccessfully opposed by two Lowland gentlemen, who were both slain together with sixty of their men. Elated by his victory, and his followers being loaded with plunder, the young Earl of Buchan was in no haste to quit the scenes of his cruel devastations, which enabled one of the king's lieutenant's, the Earl of Crawford, to come up with him, when to the satisfaction of all honest men, ample justice was inflicted on the rascally Cateran. But let this suffice as a "swatch of Hornbook's way."

About the year 1665, there was suddenly heard, on a cold winter evening, a sharp plaintive noise at a farmer's door in the parish of Cortachy, Forfarshire, which considerably alarmed the female inmates of the house, who said they were sure "it was no earthly thing," a likely conclusion in those superstitious times. But the farmer himself was of firmer stuff; he assured them that the noise which they heard was no other than that of the *broket stirk*, (a spotted steer, a year old—probably had been a pet,) "for he was ay *roustin* (lowing) about the doors;" and to show them that he was correct in his guess at once opened the door, but no *broket stirk* was to be seen. There was discovered, however, a small wicker basket, in which was neatly stowed away with tasteful surroundings, a fine male infant, and which the humane farmer carried into the house. At the sight of this strange and unlooked for presentation, surprise and wonder speedily superseded the fears of the good folks; and having without loss of time and with due circumspection, applied the usual test *in use at the time to prove its identity, and finding to their satisfaction that the infant stranger was no other than a veritable unit of humanity, the farmer and his family kindly cared for and fostered the baby. Days and years thereafter sped away, but the heartless parents of the foundling boy were

never known; and when time at last had shoved the young fellow into manhood, he was of lofty stature, powerful build, possessed of daring courage and prodigious strength. But the "Broket stirk," (for he was ever after best known by that unpropitious name,) had then no relish for the humble, every-day ploddings of honest labor; but indulged in idle, restless, wandering habits, and finally, to the great grief of his foster parents, was chosen Chief of the Oateran. During the next fifteen or twenty years, the founding Chief had led various successful raids; and if he was not on those occasions accused, as some of his villainous predecessors in office had justly been, of wantonly destroying human life, still his name became terrible to the inhabitants of the line of parishes which flank the north side of the great central valley of the kingdom. With a view of putting an end to the daring bandit's depredations, and in response to the bitter complaints of the pillaged people, the government had offered a reward for his apprehension and even made several attempts to arrest him; but regardless of these, the "Broket stirk" persistently and defiantly, carried on his lawless traffic.

Early one morning towards the end of April, in the year 1707, the farmers of the parish of Fearn (Forfarshire) woke up to discover, that the whole of their cattle throughout the entire parish (it has an area of a little over twenty-four square miles) had been stolen in course of the preceding night. At any period in the annals of agriculture, the loss of the whole cattle on a large farm district of country would have been a grave matter to their owners, but at the time when this wholesale robbery took place the loss was manifold more serious than it would have been at the present time. In the beginning of the last century, probably, farming was at its lowest possible ebb in Scotland. The annual rent then paid for farm land,—which is always a sure index to the state of farming in every country, ranged from a sixpence, to one shilling and three pence an acre (Imperial), and such was the poverty, and dissatisfaction which pervaded the rural population, which a century of retrograde national prosperity had produced, and the hopeless prospect of seeing more prosperous times, that landlords were quite willing to grant long leases to their tenants at the low rents indicated, for periods of eighty, and ninety years, and in a few exceptional cases, much longer, which the majority of their tenants had the good sense readily to accept. The plough then in use was characteristic of the times, a huge, clumsy, ponderous machine, which required the enormous draught power of from four to six yoke of oxen; and as a consequence, the furrow which it drew was quite a ditch

compared to the depth of the modern ploughfurrow. † The chief grain crop grown, was an inferior species of barley, called bigg, or bere, which being sown in an unsuitably prepared, ungenial soil, in the average of seasons returned but the shadow of a crop to the poor farmer; and the only other grain worth naming, was oats, a hardy, long, hungry-bodied grain, which was held to be of so little account, that it was frequently not sown at all, but grew wild in what they called, their "out fields." And, to cite but one of the many proofs which could be adduced of the extreme scarcity of money, and low price of labour, the farmer, and his family, whether at home, or elsewhere, rejoiced in their homespun woads, "hodin-gray and a' that" which were made up by tailors, who plied their avocation, by traveling from house to house throughout the year, at the low charge of *two-pence a day*, and their victuals. † And much later in the century, when the members of the trade succeeded in raising their pay to four-pence a day, their employers stoutly asserted that surely tailors charges had at last reached their ultimate point of extravagance! In short, the chief, if not the only personal property, possessed by the farmers, annually convertible into a little money, was their spare cattle, which they sold in the summer and autumn markets, then as now, being held in the country. In view of these depressing circumstances, no wonder consternation had seized the minds of the farmers on the discovery of the loss of their cattle, without which their farms must have lain barren for the year. But the first burst of surprise and vexation being over, and knowing well who had stolen their live stock, the men of Fearn were not wanting in promptitude, and decision of character how to act on the occasion. Swift messengers were sent through the parish, warning every able-bodied man to turn out armed, at an early hour of the day, and meet in the churchyard, each man carrying provisions to suffice for a short campaign. By noon a hundred and twenty-three men had convened, and, after council being taken, it was unanimously resolved that they should, without loss of time, pursue the Cateran, and if possible, recover their cattle by force of arms. Having appointed one of their number to act as leader, all the men moved from the grave-yard with seeming unanimity of purpose. But alas for "the best laid plans of mice, and men;" the newly appointed leader had advanced his men but a little way, when he ordered them to halt. He then, in effect, told them that a change had come suddenly "over the spirit of his dream;" represented the Cateran as being numerous, powerful and ferocious, with whom they could have no chance of success in a personal conflict, and as for himself, he had resolved to go

home and submit to the loss of his live stock, rather than foolishly sacrifice his life in so hopeless an undertaking. This insidious, craven counsel was keenly opposed by a tall slender young man, of the name of Ladin Henry, who had lately returned from the T military school, where he had acquired the reputation of being an expert swordsman, who chiefly argued from the fact that as their cattle had been all stolen under night he had reason to believe that the Cateran were few in number, weak, and afraid to meet them in arms, and that if they would accept him as their leader, he was confident they would be successful in recovering their live stock. The men then divided, when thirty-two went over to Henry's side, and eighty-nine went home with their self-repudiated, cowardly leader, who had nearly knocked the whole undertaking on the head. After saying a few words of encouragement to his men, the new leader at once resumed his march across the parish to reach the hills, the route he was confident the Cateran had taken with their cattle. On the march thither they were joined by an unacceptable recruit, in the person of a stout crazy man, whom no counsel would induce to remain at home, and as a last resort to get rid of him, they locked the man into the barn of the last farm town they visited before entering the hills. But the crazy man shewed more sagacity than all the thirty-three had done; he patiently waited in the barn until they were some miles ahead, then slipped the inside bar off the large door which communicated with the stock yard, seized a pitchfork, ran after, and soon overtook Henry and his men, who rather than injure the poor man, at last allowed him to follow them. [This trifling incident would have been unworthy of notice, had not the crazy man been destined to perform an important act of service in the approaching struggle with the Cateran.] The Fearn men travelled all that afternoon among the hills, without finding the least trace of the robbers; and all next day till evening with no better success. Just as the sun was setting, they luckily came across the trail of the cattle, and judging from the recent droppings of the animals, they concluded they were then near the Cateran. Henry and his men at once resolved to encamp for the night, having no other than the bleak mountain side for a bed, and the starry canopy for a covering. Early next morning the men were moving about, and after a frugal breakfast, and all ready to resume the pursuit of the robbers, one of the men, with a sad countenance, informed Henry, that he had dreamed in course of the past night, that they were to fight with the Cateran that day, and that he (the dreamer) was to be killed, but being convinced they had undertaken a good cause, he had resolved to go with him, and fight to

the last. It was in vain that Henry tried to raise the poor man's spirit by jokes, and otherwise; nothing would shake him out of the firm belief, that he was to be killed that day. The morning was all that they could have fancied for a beautiful spring morning, with not a breath of wind; and while a dense mantle of mist rested on the tops of the hills, the sun shone clear on the lowlands. Henry being anxious to attack the Cateran by surprise, availed himself of the mist to subserve his purpose, by placing his men sufficiently far within its verge as not to be seen by those below, while they had a full view of the lower slopes and basis of the hills as they went along. Observing this order, the Fearn men moved forward, and, after marching about two miles, and turning the shoulder of a hill which enlarged their prospect, there they saw the robbers and the cattle; the latter being busy feeding on the confines of the lowlands. It turned out that Henry was correct in his conjecture, as to the Cateran being few in number; there were only fifteen of them; but all remarkably strong men, and all well armed; each having a gun slung across his back and a broadsword by his side. And therein lay the fatal error which the Cateran committed in this their Last Raid; an overweening confidence in their individual powers combined with a grovelling avarice to divide a large amount of booty among a few, instead of among many, and the illusive belief that, if once they had gotten away with their stolen property from the homesteads of its lawful owners, the terror which their name inspired would deter pursuit. This induced them to turn out fewer in number by far than they were ever known to have done in any one of their previous marauding expeditions. And yet all seemed to go well with the Cateran that morning; so many of their number were doing duty as herds, after a peaceful retreat of two days journey, and with their plunder home-bound; others were strolling up and down among the vast herd of cattle, feasting their eyes on the fruits of what they doubtless considered a lucky adventure; and so many more were clustered round a fire on the bank of a mountain stream, called "the waters o' Saughs" (willows) which ran through their encampment, — busy cooking their breakfast, which consisted of a piece of a newly slaughtered animal, they were boiling into soup. But the substitute for a kettle, in use by the Cateran on the occasion, had little chance of becoming fashionable in our days; it was no other than the green skins of the newly flayed animals, tucked up round the sides, and supported by polls stuck into the ground with the hair side next the fire. This rude method of cooking animal food was well known, and often had recourse to in Robert the Bruce's time. A little apart, and by

himself, on a bit of elevated ground, stood the sturdy figure of the Broket stirk, in himself a host, seemingly keeping a sharp look out, chiefly in the direction of the Lowlands; in case a government scout should make his appearance. Having thus carefully viewed the strength and position of the Cateran, Henry's next object was to seek out the nearest mountain gorge, which lead down to their encampment. These gorges are formed by heavy rain falling, or sudden melting of snow on the hill, when vast streams rush through their deep cut channels to the lowlands; but in ordinary weather they are dry. It was in one of these that Henry placed his men, and such was the success of their stealthy approach that they were within eighty to a hundred yards of the robbers before they were discovered—when the alarm was given. The Fearn men then leaped out of the gorge, drew up into line, and fired a volley, but without effect, at the astonished Cateran, who promptly returned the fire, which instantly killed one of the Fearn men. As the practice then was and had been from remote times, both parties threw aside their guns and drew their swords, for a hand-to-hand combat; and as the thin hostile lines were approaching each other with deadly intent, and about twenty yards apart, the Cateran suddenly stood still, and their leader made a step before his men with his sword point all but touching the ground. On observing this the Fearn men also halted, when the Chief, in civil terms, requested to be informed who among them was their leader. Henry promptly replied, 'I am he instead of a better.' The crafty Chief then said: to avoid unnecessary bloodshed, to which he had been always averse, he considered it would be by far the better way that they, the two chiefs, should decide the quarrel by single combat, and if he (the Fearn chief) was conqueror, he pledged the * *honor of his clanship*, that the cattle would be peaceably given up, but should the issue of the combat be otherwise, they (the Caterans) should be allowed to drive them away without molestation. To the astonishment of the Fearn men, their fool-hardy leader at once accepted the proposition. Whereupon the Chief, with a smile, advanced to the middle space between the lines, complimented the Fearn leader on his gallantry and as a proof of the regard which he had for his courage, offered him the choice of position. At first sight this may appear to have been a very small affair; but when it is understood that the ground on which the hostile parties stood, was sloping, and by Henry choosing the higher ground, which he was careful to do, it gave him an elevation above the level of his opponent of from nine to twelve inches; no mean offer, if the combatants had been in other respects any thing

like equally matched. The preliminaries having been arranged to the satisfaction of both parties, the Fearn men formed a semi-circle on one side of their chiefs, and the Cateran a similar figure on the other. The combat began. Henry was at once made aware that he had encountered a swordsman of the first mark, and what was to him far more serious, that he had neither strength of arm, nor strength of weapon, to enable him to keep up his guards in fighting with such an overwhelmingly powerful man as the Broket stirk; the consequence was, at the first, or second pass of the Chief's sword, he smashed Henry's sword blade in pieces, leaving him a stump of some three or four inches beyond the hilt. But in that most perilous moment of his life the Fearn leader's happy presence of mind did not forsake him, for while the tremendous hack aimed to cut him down was actually descending, he cleverly evaded the blow by springing in below the arm pit of the sword arm of the Chief, when the point of his sword cut deep into the elevated spot of ground whereon the vanquished Henry had stood but the fraction of a second before, which enabled him to leap back and remingle with his command unhurt. Meantime the Fearn men, being alarmed at the extreme danger of their leader, and foreseeing that if the agreement to which he had foolishly assented was to be carried out in good faith, their cattle would be hopelessly lost, one of them darted forward, and simultaneously with the Chief missing stroke, and while his sword for the moment, was entangled in the ground among the matted heather, gave him a sword cut across the bare houghs (he wore a kilt) separating the tendons of both limbs, which instantly compelled him to drop to his knees. This foul stroke given the Chief, by the Fearn man, in breach of the compact entered into by both chiefs, and tacitly by both parties, and also in violation of the usage which the lapse of many centuries had given the force of law for the protection of single combatants from outside assault, so enraged the Cateran, that an immediate general *meles* ensued. Many of the men hastily advanced a few paces, others retreated as far, all in quest of the most favorable positions for the contest, and while a number of Homeric battles were being fought, imprecations, and reproaches, were loudly, and bitterly bandied by both sides, and when to these were added the clashing of swords, the shrieks of the wounded, and the moans of the dying, the noise which had suddenly sprung up was horrible in the extreme. Both parties fought with desperate courage, the one obviously to recover their stolen property, the other to keep what they had gotten; but the Cateran, discouraged by the loss of their conquering chief, and their

enemies being more than two to one against them, at last fled, leaving four of their number killed behind them. After a short and unavailing pursuit of the fugitives, the Fearn men returned to despatch the wounded Chief who could not run away, and who throughout the general fight had successfully defended himself against all his assailants. Then was witnessed one of those rare displays of heroic, individual effort, which would have done credit to the days of chivalry; for however much we may detest the vile avocation in which the Broketstirk had embarked, it is difficult to withhold our admiration of the courage of the man, who, although deserted by all his followers, badly wounded, reduced to fight upon his knees, surrounded by his enemies who would give no quarter, and the last shred of hope that he could escape with his life torn from him; yet so powerfully and dexterously did he wield his terrible sword as to compel thirty-two armed men, flushed with recent victory, and all school-trained to the use of the weapon with which they fought, to stand at bay for a considerable part of that, the last of his days. And yet, after all, perhaps the Fearn men judged wisely and well for believing, as they afterwards acknowledged, that they could not have made a rush in to cut the infuriated bandit down without sacrificing two or three of their number—they preferred keeping at a safe distance from his sword, and there gave free and ready expression to reiterated threats and taunts of their speedy triumph over him; and while they made feints from time to time as if they would have gone in upon him, the crazy man at last succeeded in giving him a severe stab in the back with his long-handled pitch-fork, having driven both tines deep into his body in the region of the heart. This fatal wound caused the sword arm of the strong man to hang by his side, when the Fearn men, seeing their opportunity, hurried in and completed his death.

Thus fell the last, and probably the most notable Chief the Cateran ever had, a man who had the name of being more powerful, daring, and dreaded than any other man of his country in his time. He was harshly treated when he came into the world, and he neither sought for, nor obtained mercy when he was sent out of it; and if his means of acquiring daily bread had been as honest as they were disreputable and injurious to his fellow men, the conclusion would have been unavoidable, that he was cheated out of his life. The casualties on the side of the Cateran were five killed, and two mortally wounded; one of the latter was observed to run from the contest early, using his best endeavors as he ran, to hold in his protruding bowels. On the Fearn side there was only one man killed by the fire of the Cateran, the

man who dreamed; the rest, wonderful to say, got off scratch free. With the exception of the great prize, the recovery of their cattle, the spoil which fell to the victors was insignificant; a few guns, swords, and old plaids, were all they gathered up.

It was a day of great joy and rejoicing among the people of Fearn when the news reached them that the Cateran had been defeated, and their cattle recovered; indeed, they have had no such another day of rejoicing since. And it is to be charitably hoped that it had still further added to the gratification of many of them, when they were shortly after informed that the gallant, but incautious Ladin Henry, who in the face of much craven opposition, had spirited on a small minority of their number to the successful rescue of their live-stock—was neither neglected nor forgotten by the men who were at the helm of Government at the time. The Lords of Her Majesty's (Queen Anne) Treasury for Scotland, conferred a pension upon him, caused a new house to be built and carefully fortified, for his accommodation, and safe protection in his native parish, to which they added a small piece of farm land, free for life. Such was the liberal reward which the government conferred upon an obscure young man, at a time when government rewards were, as a rule, but rarely and scantily dealt out in Scotland, a circumstance of itself suggestive of strong presumptive proof of the magnitude of the pest of which he had been instrumental in ridding his country.

But if Ladin Henry was secure from the assaults of his numerous enemies in his new and strong house, it was far otherwise with him, on various occasions out of it. The malevolent Cateran asserted to the last of their days, that their much idolized chief had been murdered by the treachery of the Fearn men, and holding Henry responsible for their acts, and being enraged at the applause and regard he had received for inflicting an irreparable injury upon them, they pursued him with intense malice and desire to wreak their vengeance upon him, which they had resolved to accomplish by all the means they could devise. But of the several attempts made by them from first to last, I shall only briefly notice one of them, from which the ex-Fearn leader made but a hair-breadth escape with his life.

Years after the raid in question, a farmer of the parish got up a feast, to which he invited a number of neighbors, and along with others, Henry, for whom he affected especial friendship and regard. When the day of entertainment came round, all were friendly, social and happy, and no one present was so unremitting in his obliging attentions to Henry as was his ever-smiling host. And when the time

of his leaving to go home came, being a few hours after night fall, his gracious landlord would still add an additional proof of his friendship, by accompanying him a little bit on his way home. Henry was then a little over two miles from his house and family, the road to which lay at the foot of the hill, and his entertainer for the day having completed his short convoy shook hands, with apparent cordiality, and bade him good-night. But the treacherous wretch had only allowed his retiring guest to progress a little way when he piped out at the top of his voice, three times in succession, "Good-night, Ladin Henry." Poor Henry knew at once he had been betrayed; indeed there could be no mistake about it, for the preconcerted signal was scarcely given, when up started a number of armed men and although he saw but imperfectly, yet he readily knew from the noise of their foot-treads, they were rapidly surrounding him. Not a moment was to be lost, he ran for his life, and a host of Cateran pell mell after him, but Henry, being a tall agile man in the prime of life, ran a good foot, and, after a long race, found that he could head some way the swiftest of his pursuers. But then the momentous question started in his mind—where was he to find a place of safety? For he rightly judged, from the large number of enemies who were in pursuit of him, that they had used the precaution to put a guard on his dwelling house, and that his endeavor to enter it would have issued in certain death; again, if he should attempt to keep the hills, and head his enemies by speed of foot for the night, he was sure to be run down long before morning, and, without mercy, hacked to pieces. While these perplexing thoughts harassed his mind, he happily remembered a small cave, in the face of one of the neighbouring hills, the mouth of which was partially concealed from view, by the long shaggy heather which grew around it. To it he put, at the top of his speed, and having darted into it, and drawn his dog, which accompanied him, in between his knees, he there resolved to abide the perils of the night. A minute or so thereafter had scarcely elapsed, when past rushed the Cateran in hot pursuit, no doubt believing that the game would soon be at their feet. This was so far reassuring to Henry, that his enemies being strangers to the locality, knew not of his hiding place, neither had they seen him enter it; yet his hope of safety waned considerably, when about an hour after he heard their footsteps returning, and so near came they in repassing, that many of them went over the top of his place of hiding, when he distinctly heard one make the ominous remark, "It was just hereabout we lost sight of him." In short they sought him throughout the entire night, down to daybreak, with the most pains-taking

industry. Sometimes he heard their footsteps near, at other times more distant; but a gracious Providence having protected him, Henry remained in his hiding place until some hours after sunrise, and when he ventured out he neither saw friend nor foe throughout the barren waste, and, to the great joy of his wife and family, he reached his home in safety.

It afterward transpired, that on the near approach of day, their night long, unavailing, blood-hound travel, had proved quite enough for even the hardy, and enduring Cateran, and probably having had a commendable regard for a Government proclamation, in which special reasons were given for their being wanted at head-quarters, which the cunning rogues suspected, was for no other purpose than that of 'marching them up a ladder, and down a tow,' they at once 'cleared out' for parts unknown. But if the failure of their deep laid scheme, which had for its object, to take life, had imposed grievous disappointment on the Cateran on their leaving the confines of the Lowlands that morning, their dissatisfaction was much more embittered when they were afterwards informed, where, and by what means, their devoted victim had escaped their murdering fangs on the night of their harpy's feast. Small parties of their hopeless fraternity made stealthy visits to inspect the nest after the bird had flown, and when they remembered how often they had passed, and repassed in course of the night the spot where he lay; the diligent search which they had made in and about the place where he had disappeared from their view, and the ease which they conceived they should have had in discovering the place of his concealment; they settled down in the belief that nothing less than a "charmed life" had saved him from their clutches. And indeed, the Cateran were not far astray in their coming to this conclusion; for the ex-Fearn leader had a charmed life in as far as their malevolent cravings to deprive him of it were destined never to be gratified.

The decline of the power and extinction of the long standing, and much dreaded Cateran, were not long in following after the disaster they experienced in the issue of the Fearn raid. On the fall of their redoubted chieftan on the banks of the Saughs, who had long been their pride, their guiding star, and their backbone of strength in every raid and robbery in which he had been their leader; they despaired of finding another Chief possessing even the lineaments of his character, and perhaps being influenced by an avowed determination of the Government to put a final stop to their lawless practices, they shrank into obscurity, and not long after ceased to exist as an organ-

ired body,—a consummation which both Highland men and Lowland men, waether at home or in other lands, are not now likely to view as a matter of regret. It was creditable to the people of Fearn the way they deported themselves towards the black-hearted scoundrel, the farmer, who had received a bribe to betray his unsuspecting guest into the hands of the merciless Cateran; he ever after, down to the time of his death, lived a despised and an avoided man.

In 1822, your correspondent was prompted by curiosity to pay a visit to Ladin Henry's dwelling house, and the banks of the Saughs, where the struggle with the Cateran had been. With the exception of the strong mailed door, which had been removed years before, he found the shell of the house entire as its original occupant had left it. The side walls were a little over twelve feet high, thick and strongly built, they having been cemented throughout with grout lime; and instead of windows, of which it had none, both side and end walls were thickly perforated with iron-cased loop-holes, which were so constructed that the inside occupant, at any one of them had a considerable range of outside view. The space within walls only measured about sixteen by twenty-two feet; but as the building did not possess the ordinary comforts and conveniences of a modern dwelling house, it had been long without a tenant, and the only purpose which it then served was its being a shelter to cattle in times of inclement weather. My guide experienced no difficulty in taking me direct to the place where the affray with the robbers had been. In burying the dead, the Fearn men had to use their broadswords instead of spades, and consequently the trench into which the dead bodies were thrown had been shallow and the covering mould but scanty, which rain in the course of years had washed a portion of it away, so as to expose to the view of the passing stranger a part of the bones of the fallen Cateran in the slope of the bank, about twenty feet above the level of the mountain stream, which still marmured past in the solitary waste, as it doubtless had done when the owners of those bones were busy cooking their breakfast on its banks. The remains of the Fearn man were carried to the church yard of Cortachy, and there interred with suitable respect. Many years after, a kind friend had erected a neat head stone to his memory, on which is engraved an epitaph containing a modest record of the name, time, place, and cause of the death of deceased, with this trifling error, his death is represented to have taken place a year later than it actually occurred.

* In all auspicious cases, if a pin puncture brought blood to the surface of the skin, then the child, if it was a male, was no *goblin* in disguise, and if a female, no *fairy*, &c.

† In 1812 your correspondent was acquainted with a farmer in the parish of Brochin, who was a residuary life-renter on an old farm lease, and by a singular clause in said lease, he, the life-renter, was entitled to hold possession of said farm, "three years after he was dead. Again, in 1835, your correspondent was informed by a Scotch lawyer, that he knew of two old farm leases then current, the one of which was for "two hundred and eighty-nine years, and the tenure of the other was equivalent to a holding in *Fes Simple*, being "as long as grass grows and water runs" down a declivity.

‡ The modern two-horse plow, which has unquestionably contributed largely to the increase of Agricultural prosperity and wealth all over the civilized world, was first introduced into Scotland about 1765, by James Small, an ingenious mechanic, of the county of Edinburgh. It is true the Rotherham two-horse plough had been introduced into England, and a patent procured for it so early as 1720; but whether arising from a defect in the construction of the implement or sheer prejudice operating against it, are questions which cannot now be easily solved; but this much is certain, the great bulk of English farmers allowed the Rotherham plough to lie in abeyance, until years after the advent of the present century; whereas Small's plough met with the ready approval of the patrons of Agriculture on its first appearance, and soon after became the favourite plough of the great majority of the Lowland farmers.

§ From the middle, and toward the end of last century, there lived a tailor of the name of David Wood, a character, on the eastside of the North Esk river, which forms the boundary line between the counties of Forfar and Kincairdine, who, in a coterie of his socials, told the following anecdote in reference to his experience in trade, the moral of which is confirmatory of the truth of the proverb, "that a prophet has no honor in his own country." "Quoth David,—When I saw on the east side of the water, I get naething but blashim and blawthrow, could kals and tippence; but when I saw on the west side of the water, I get Deacon Wood and David Wood, broth and beef, and thripence,—a material odds indeed gentlemen."

¶ The old Scotch Statute was still then in force, which made it imperative on the parents and guardians of male children, to enter them all without exception, in one or other of the many military schools, situated throughout the country, at the early age of fourteen, and in no case was a pupil allowed to leave said school without obtaining a certificate, that he had at least acquired a mediocrity knowledge of the art of fencing with the broad sword.

** That the thing called *honor* was not altogether wanting among this class of thieves, however rarely exemplified, the following well authenticated little incident goes a far way to prove:—During the protracted wanderings, privations and perils of Prince Charles Edward among the Highlands, after his defeat at Culloden, the pinchings of extreme hunger induced him to step alone on an evening, into the sooty den of nine hill robbers, who were about to partake of, and rejoice over a piece of a stolen cow, and although Charles was known at first sight to more than one of them, and the enriching sum of £20,000 was assuredly theirs by the delivery of his person, dead or alive, to the Government authorities, yet those noble black-legs scorned to touch the price of blood,—freely shared their rough hospitality with the unfortunate adventurer, and afterwards furnished him with a guide, to what they considered, a more secure lurking place than he would have had by remaining among them.



