

SCOTLAND DELINEATED (pp. 49-52)

Between Mull and the coast of Argyleshire, in a spacious bay, lies the narrow but fertile island of *Lismore*, about nine miles in length. To the south-east of Mull, along the coast of Argyleshire, are several small isles; particularly that of *Eysdale*, the noted slate island; *Suil*, *Long*, *Shuna*, and *Scarba*, which are very fruitful spots, and have also good slate quarries.

Between Scarba and the north point of Jura, is the dangerous whirlpool of *Coryvrekan*, so called from the name of a young Danish prince, who perished in this place. As the tide advances, this unfathomable gulf, of which the dreadful vortex extends above a mile in circuit, begins to boil up; and, at full sea, its numerous eddies form watery pyramids, which rise high into the air, and, bursting with the noise of thunder, whiten the subjacent waves with foam. Many smaller whirlpools and rapid currents are found in this neighbourhood; dangerous, however, to those only who are strangers to the coast.

Jura is about twenty miles in length, and seven in breadth. It is almost intersected on the west side by an arm of the sea called *Loch Tarbet*. Some parts of the southern and western sides are fertile. There are only three mountains in the island; these are of stupendous height; and, being of a conic form, are called the *Paps of Jura*. The rest of the island is flat, and in general covered with heath. A few wild roes are still seen in this island.

The fertile little islands of *Colonsa* and *Oronsa*, are situated about seven miles west from Jura. *Oronsa* is remarkable for the ruins of an ancient abbey, in which are seen many monumental statues, and some curious antique sculpture.

To the south-west of Jura lies the island of *Islay*. Its greatest length is twenty-five miles; its breadth eighteen. It is deeply indented on the south by the great bay called *Loch-in-daal*, at the head of which formerly stood the village of *Killarow*. The principal village now, is *Bowmore*, where there is a post-house, and where several neat buildings have lately been erected. This new town has a convenient harbour.

The face of the country is hilly, but not extremely high. Several mines are here wrought with considerable profit. The lead-ore is very rich. It produces seventeen hundred weight of lead each ton, and no less than forty-two ounces of silver. The copper-ore yields about one-third of its weight in metal. Amid vast strata of iron-stone, there is here found in abundance the peculiar fort called Emery. This substance pulverized is much used by artists in polishing stones and metals. Native quicksilver has also been met with in small quantities; but no discovery has been made from whence it came, nor has any native cinnabar been found in this country. Some small pieces of the mineral called Black-lead, have been observed; but the mass from which these have been detached remains undiscovered. In this place, nature has provided immense stores of limestone, marl, and shell-sand, on purpose, as it were, to manure the soil, which is for the most part very improvable. Much corn and flax is raised in this island, and a considerable number of cattle is annually exported.

In this and some of the neighbouring islands, multitudes of adders infest the heath. Many people retain still the vulgar error, that they sting with their forked tongue; and prescribe many ridiculous cures for their bite.

On the north-west side of the island is the cave of *Sanegmore*, which is a grotto, divided into a number of far winding passages, sometimes opening into fine expanses; again closing for a long space into galleries, and forming a curious subterraneous labyrinth. Beside this, there are many other caverns, the haunt of numerous wild pigeons. The goats that feed among the rocks are so wild, that their owners are obliged to shoot them like deer. Some vestiges of antiquity are seen on this island, particularly the remains of a circular dry stone building on the hill of *Loffet*, near the sound of Islay.

Toward the peninsula of Cantyre, is the small island *Giga*, from which the inhabitants annually export a considerable quantity of grain.

This island, and all those south of Skye, except Egg, are comprehended under Argyleshire.