

be thrust in, and in warding off every query directed against himself. The wayside colloquy resolves itself into a sort of sword-and-buckler match: and he must be tolerably cunning in thrusting and warding who proves an overmatch for the Highlander.* And in the Lowlands of Scotland, though in perhaps

* One of the most amusing sketches of this sort of sword-and-buckler play which I have anywhere seen may be found in Macculloch's "Travels in the Western and Northern Highlands." Were I desirous to get up a counter sketch equally characteristic of the incurious communicative turn of the English, I would choose as my subject a conversation — if conversation that could be called in which the speaking was all on the one side — into which I entered with an Englishman near Stourbridge. He gave me first his own history, and then his father and mother's history, with occasional episodes illustrative of the condition and prospects of his three aunts and his two uncles, and wound up the whole by a detail of certain love passages in the biography of his brother, who was pledged to a solid Scotchwoman, but who had resolved not to get married until his sweetheart and himself, who were both in service, should have saved a little more money. And all that the narrator knew of me, in turn, or wished to know, was simply that I was a Scot, and a good listener. Macculloch's sketch, however, of the inquisitive Highlander, would have decidedly the advantage over any sketch of mine of the incurious Englishman: his dialogue is smart, compact, and amusing, though perhaps a little dashed with caricature; whereas the Englishman's narratives were long, prosy, and dull. The scene of the dialogue furnished by the traveller is laid in Glen Lednack, where he meets a snuffy-looking native cutting grass with a pocket-knife, and asks, — "How far is it to Killin?" — "It's a fine day." — "Ay, it's a fine day for your hay." — "Ah! there's no muckle hay; this is an unco cauld glen." — "I suppose this is the road to Killin?" (trying him on another tack.) — "That's an unco fat beast o' yours." — "Yes; she is much too fat; she is just from grass." — "Ah! it's a mere, I see; it's a gude beast to gang, I'se warran' you." — "Yes, yes; it's a very good pony." — "I selled just sic another at Doune fair, five years by-past: I warran' ye she's a Highland-bred beast?" — "I don't know, I bought her in Edinburgh." — "A-weel, a-weel, mony sic like gangs to the Edinburgh market frae the Highlands." — "Very likely; she seems to have Highland blood in her." — "Ay, ay: would you be selling her?" — "No, I don't want to sell