

have wandered for hours,' says Hugh Miller, 'amid the sand-wastes of this ruined barony, and seen only a few stunted bushes of broom, and a few scattered tufts of withered bent, occupying, amid utter barrenness, the place of what, in the middle of the seventeenth century, had been the richest fields of the rich province of Moray.'¹ The coast of Aberdeenshire is varied with wide stretches of drifting sands. One of these extends for several miles on both sides of Rattray Head, and another runs for some fifteen miles from near Slains to Aberdeen. Many a fair field has disappeared under the dunes, as these march inland. 'The parish of Forvie,' says Pennant, 'is now entirely overwhelmed with sand except two farms. It was in 1600 all arable land, now covered with shifting sands, like the deserts of Arabia, and no vestiges remain of any buildings except a small fragment of a church.'² The wide Tents Muir, between the bay of St. Andrews and the mouth of the Tay, presents a remarkably good example of the parallelism of the successive sand-ridges with the line of the coast.

On the west side of the country many tracts of dunes also occur. They are particularly abundant in the southern half of the Hebrides, where the Atlantic breezes have built up an almost continuous strip of sandy ridges along the western coasts of Bernera and North and South Uist. Again, on the west sides of the islands of Coll and Tiree, and in Macrihanish Bay, Cantire, similar accumulations may be seen. Even in the comparatively sheltered basin of the Clyde, examples occur not less extensive than those of more open parts of the coast-line. The margin of Ayrshire, for fully fifteen miles between Stevenston and Ayr, is fringed with dunes, where the same melancholy tale of devastation is

¹ *Sketch-Book of Popular Geology*, p. 13.

² *First Tour*, p. 144.