

NUMBER II.

PARISH OF BOLESKINE AND ABERTARF,

(COUNTY OF INVERNESS, SYNOD OF GLENELG, AND
PRESBYTERY OF ABERTARF.)

By an Heritor, a friend to Statistical Inquiries.

Name, and Extent, &c.

THE parish of Boleskine, so termed from a farm contiguous to the Fall of Foyers, meaning *Bail-o's-cionn* in Gaelic, or the town hanging above the loch, was many years ago united with the parish of Abertarf, situated in the neighbourhood of Fort-Augustus, and so denominated from the confluence of two rivers, Tarf and Oich, which, discharging themselves into Lochness, forms the ground on which the garrison now stands to a beautiful peninsula. The date of this union, nor the particular lands composing each of these parishes, cannot be traced. The united parish

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is at least 24 miles in length, and in most parts from 10 to 12 miles in breadth.—It formerly contained two glebes, one near Fort-Augustus, and the other at Boleiskine; and the latter place, though the north-east boundary of the parish, contained till lately the church and manse. But this having been found inconvenient, and the idea of religious penance exploded, they were, about 30 years ago, removed to a more central situation at Drimtemple, probably deriving its name from having been anciently a place of worship; *Drim* signifying a ridge or height, and *Teample* what it bears in the English language. At this time both the old glebes were annexed to the estate of Lovat, then under the management of the Commissioners of forfeited estates, and an equivalent given to the minister contiguous to the new church. This measure relieved the clergyman from preaching in two different places of Stratherrick, as, when the church remained at Boleiskine, he was in use every second Sabbath, of performing worship at a place called Bellaloin, about one mile distant from Drimtemple.

Ancient History.—The whole of this united parish was, previous to the 15th century, the property of the Lovat family; but who previously possessed it can only be learned from tradition. What leads to a belief that Abertarf was inhabited by the Cummins, a very powerful and warlike clan, is, that the place of Fort-Augustus, only called so from the establishment of the garrison, is in the vulgar language called Kilichuiman, meaning the burial-ground of the Cummins. And an eminence on the hill to the east of Lochtarf is called Sui-Chuiman, or Cummin's resting-place.

Stratherrick, composing the other part of this parish, so called from the river *Errick*, rising in the mountains of Strathdearn, and entering Lochness at *Boleiskine*, Strath signifying

nifying a valley or plain betwixt two hills, was anciently possessed by the clan Grant; whether they quitted it voluntarily or otherwise, is immaterial as well as uncertain; but it would appear they went from thence to Strathspey, and called the names of their new possessions after those they inhabited in Stratherrick. Thus we still find the names of Delchapple, Garthbeg, and Garthmore, &c. in both these countries. Before the year 1545 the united parish seems to have been occupied by the tribes called Macgrucers, Macimesheirs, and Maclavishes, then followers of the Lovat family; but the principal persons of all these tribes having accompanied the Lord Lovat in his expedition to settle the heir of the Clanronald family in his father's estate, were almost cut off in a bloody battle fought that year at the east end of Lochlochy, by the Clan Macdonald, who intercepted Lovat and his attendants in their return from the Hebrides; this battle, called Blar-lein, from the warriors on both sides having stripped and fought in their shirts, is recorded in the following picturesque lines of Buchanan's history of Scotland: " *Fra-*
" *serii pauciores a pluribus victi, atque ad unum cæsi. Ita*
" *gens numerosissima et sæpe de re Scotica bene merita*
" *tota interierat, nisi divino (ut credi par est) consilio, ex*
" *familiæ principibus octoginta domi reliquissent gravidas*
" *uxores, quæ suo quæque tempore mares peperunt singulos;*
" *qui omnes incolumes ad virilem pervenerunt ætatem.*"
A few years before this period, a son of Lovat had settled at Foyers, and at same time acquired the property of the lands of Aberchalder in Abertarf. And the lineal descendant of another of Lovat's sons settled at Farraline, situated by a lake of that name in Stratherrick.—At the above conflict Farraline was slain, and Foyers so dangerously wounded, that he was carried from the field of battle by one Norman Gow, on his back, to the top of Suichuimain, about
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eight miles from Lochlochy; but Gow having an arrow in his side all the time, found himself unable to proceed farther, and there pulled out the arrow and expired. His descendants, in commemoration of this amazing effort of attachment, enjoyed a croft of land, rent free, from the family of Foyers till within these sixty years. Mr Frazer of Foyers having recovered from his wounds, was enabled, with the assistance of the few commoners who had not accompanied their chief on this fatal occasion, to protect the country from the inroads of the rival clan, who were much enfeebled by the effects of this severe conflict.

The numerous offspring descended of the Frasers killed in that battle, grew up, in process of time, to obliterate the depopulation thereby occasioned; and to corroborate the evidence resulting from the above passage in Buchanan, it is a notorious fact, that the whole principal gentlemen now resident in Stratherrick do, (with a few exceptions), trace their descent either from Mr Frazer of Foyers, or Farraline above mentioned; hence the country of Stratherrick for many years consisted principally of two tribes, the one called Mac-mhic-ulliams, or Foyer's tribe; and the other Sliochd-ion-mhic-alister, or Farraline's tribe: and from the 1545, till the forfeiture of the Lovat estate in the 1746, the state of the Highlands requiring much the attachment of vassals and tenants to their chief, Stratherrick was more considered as a nursery of men, than as yielding much pecuniary emolument to the Lovat family. Some of them received feu-rights of certain parts of the country, and all the younger sons, possessed of any funds, obtained proper wadsets of their respective possessions; and in the general valuation of the county for ascertaining the land-tax, in the 1691, every wadsetter is rated in the same manner with the heritors.

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In all contests betwixt the Lovat family, their neighbours, and others, the Stratherrick tribes were ready upon the first summons to espouse the cause of their chief; and as every tribe arranged itself under its particular leader, the county of Stratherrick exhibited a species of military subordination. If any dispute happened among individuals in the country, it was generally terminated by the strong-hand, or the baron-baillie placed there by the Lovat family, who was vested with the extravagant jurisdiction of the times. As the wadsetters had the lands on very moderate conditions, the principal rent demanded by them from their sub-tenants and cottars was military attendance, and their aid and assistance in such agricultural and rural services as was necessary for the wadsetter's accommodation.

Till the beginning of this century, the whole heritors and wadsetters in this parish, lived in houses, composed of couple trees, and the walls and thatch made up of sod and divot; but in every wadsetter's house, there was a spacious hall, containing a large table, where he and his family and dependants eat their two meals a-day, with this single distinction, that he and his family sat at the one end of the table, and his dependants at the other; and it was reckoned no disparagement for the gentlemen to sit with commoners in the inns, such as the country then afforded, where one *cap*, and afterwards a single glass, went round the whole company. As the inhabitants experienced no want, and generally lived on the produce of their farms, they were hospitable to strangers, providing they did not attempt a settlement among them. But it was thought then disgraceful for any of the younger sons of these wadsetters, to follow any other profession than that of arms and agriculture; and it is in the remembrance of many now living, when the meanest tenant, would think it disparaging, to sit at the same table with a manufacturer. In progress of time, however, these
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prejudices gave way to ideas, more suitable to an improved state of society.—This country is naturally divided by rivers, hills, and moors, into a variety of sections, and each of these admitting of some agricultural cultivation, have been computed by the inhabitants into davochs, half davochs, or plough-lands, being the fourth part of a davoch, according to their extent; each half davoch-land was again subdivided into eight parts, commonly called aughten-parts, and agreeable to the regularity and order which the Author of Nature has observed in all his operations. The whole country, with two exceptions, consists of a variety of half davoch-lands, each of which was let or disposed by the Lovat family or their chamberlain to a wadsetter or principal tackfman, and had no concern with the sub-tenantry; each sub-tenant had again a variety of cottars, equally unconnected with the principal tackfman; and each of these had a number of cattle of all denominations, proportional to their respective holdings, with the produce whereof he fed and clad himself and whole family. As there were extensive sheallings or grafings attached to this country, in the neighbourhood of the lordship of Badenoch, the inhabitants in the beginning of summer removed to these sheallings with their whole cattle, man, woman, and child; and it was no uncommon thing, to observe an infant in one creel, and a stone on the other side of the horse, to keep up an equilibrium; and when the grafs became scarce in the sheallings, they returned again to their principal farms, where they remained while they had sufficiency of pasture, and then, in the same manner, went back to their sheallings, and observed this ambulatory course during the seasons of vegetation; and the only operations attended to during the summer season was their peats or fuel, and repairing their rustic habitations. When their small crops were fit for it, all hands descended from the hills, and continued on the farms till the

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same was cut and secured in barns, the walls of which were generally made of dry stone, or wreathed with branches or boughs of trees; and it was no singular custom, after harvest, for the whole inhabitants to return to their sheallings, and to abide there till driven from thence by the snow. During the winter and spring, the whole pasturage of the country was a common, and a pound-fold was a thing totally unknown. The cultivation of the country was all performed in spring, the inhabitants having no taste for following green crops or other modern improvements.

Alteration since 1746.—From the year 1746, the minds of the inhabitants seemed to have taken a different turn; the wadsetters, finding no longer the importance of their sub-tenants, cottars, and dependants, withdrew their former familiarity and protection; and these thereupon imbibed a spirit of independence; and trusting to their own industry and exertions, many of them quitted their native country, for a better mode of living; and those who remained, being now obliged to pay money-rent in place of their former services, became more attentive to the cultivation of the soil. The wadsetters rights, having been all redeemed by the Crown, while in possession of the Lovat estate, became then sensible of their precarious tenures, and exacted from their tenants an additional rent, proportioned to the value of their possessions; and it must be acknowledged, that this change of system made a great alteration on the appearance of the inhabitants; they no longer were seen at church or market with garments the produce of their own sheep, spun by their wives and daughters, and the simple fare of their ancestors entirely lost its relish; the labourer increased his demand of wages; and the principal tackfman, thereby finding the returns from his holding not to bear proportion to his wants, bethought himself of a different plan of management,

and exchanged his former tenants and dependants for a flock of south country sheep. This step, altho' it had the appearance of great rigour, has turned out much to the advantage of the tenantry, who thereupon retired to the town of Inverness; and applying themselves to industrious labour in the two manufactories there, they thereby not only improved their living, but were enabled to give education and trades to their children, some of whom are now sending grateful remittances from distant climes. The introduction of sheep, though it at first had only the effect of banishing the small tenantry, will, if successful, in a few years have the same tendency towards the principal tacksmen; and this once populous country will then exhibit the same scene of depopulation as we behold in the borders of this part of the united kingdoms: at same time, the success of this new plan appears problematical, from the state of the climate, which we shall now attempt to describe.—But we must here, in treating of this parish, make a distinction betwixt the parts of it to the east of Suichuiman, and those to the westward; the latter shall be denominated Abertarf, and the former Stratherrick.

Climate.—The country of Abertarf, containing an extensive plain from the west end of Lochness to the bounds of the parish of Kilmanivaig, is hardly 30 or 40 feet above the level of the sea; and owing to this circumstance, as well as to the temperature of the lake, it is very little addicted to any lasting snow; but from its contiguity to the Western Ocean, much more liable to floods of rain than the eastern part of the parish.—Stratherrick, rising gradually from the river Tarf to an altitude of 400 or 500 feet above the level of the lake, with the exception only of the principal residence of the family of Foyers, and some other possessions on the banks of the lake, being nearly the central point betwixt

twixt the eastern and western seas, is not liable to incessant rains; but, from its being furrounded with very high hills, it is not only accustomed to an early fall of snow, but it is in the remembrance of many persons now in life, to have seen the country for 6, 8, and 9 weeks, in such a state that not a tuft of heather was to be seen. It is true, this has not been the case for seven or eight years bygone, but who can venture to say that these seasons may not again recur; and as the produce of the country in corn and hay could not subsist its present immense flock of the woolly species for one week, the question is, in that event, in what manner they can be preserved from starvation?

Soil.—The soil in this parish is of different qualities; that in Abertarf consists, in the surface, of light black mould, but sandy in the bottom; and in most years, from the great moisture issuing from the rains and vapours, to which that part of the parish is generally liable, the growth of corn and grass is very abundant; but except early crops, it is very seldom got safely secured. In Stratherrick, except in the few farms on the banks of Lochness, the soil is of a quality nearly approximating to moss. On the south side of the country it is generally observed that the surface is not above a foot or 18 inches from the chingle; on the north, from two to three feet deep; but as the whole united parish is intersected by a variety of rivers, the lands on the banks thereof are frequently found to contain abundance of clay, which in many places is very near the surface; and as these rivers are permitted to flow in their natural direction, without any interruption, they frequently inundate the neighbouring plains, and often lacerate and demolish those parts thereof contiguous to them; and when these overflows happen in the winter or spring seasons, before the crop is sown, the effect thereof is greatly to ameliorate vegetation, and
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the consequence is a redundant crop of corn; but when this happens after the seed is in the ground, it generally proves the destruction of the crop; but the portions of lands, contiguous to rivers, always produce the most exuberant crop of natural hay and pasturage.

Agricultural Procefs.—Although no parish is better supplied by nature with limestone, there being abundance thereof in the lands of Foyers in Statherrick, and in Aberchalder in Abertarf, it is with regret we must mention, that the same has proved of very little benefit to the inhabitants of this parish. We do not learn that any part of Abertarf has been tried with lime as a manure, although many of the farms are within a very little distance of the quarry. It is true, Mr James Frazer, writer to the signet, proprietor of the lands of Gortuleg, has, within these 5 or 6 years, manured his ground with lime brought from the quarries of Mr Frazer of Foyers; from the ruggedness of the road, he is obliged to lead the lime-stone on horses backs to his farm, or places nearly contiguous thereto; and as he has abundance of convenient fuel, he is enabled to burn them, in kilns built in the corners of his fields, with less expence than any of his neighbours; and although the consequential returns of green crops, potatoes, and corn, greatly exceeds what is usual in that country, the great expence of procuring this manure, does not seem to afford sufficient encouragement, for his example admitting of imitation; but probably the heritor of this quarry, may lay down a plan, for disposing of the raw materials, at a moderate rate, for a specific number of years, and his neighbours may thereby be induced to make sufficient roads to the quarry, and thereby, with all local inconveniences, make a trial of this species of manure, especially as the country abounds in variety of mosses, which has now been found by experience to be an excellent

lent subject of improvement, when drained and sufficiently manured with lime. It should not be omitted, that some of the principal tacksmen in this country, have of late years been in the practice, of ploughing their ground, in the latter end of harvest, and beginning of winter; but the generality of sub-tenants continue the old mode of labouring, which, so far as we have been able to learn, was as follows: When a field was 3, 4, or 5 years lea, and failed to produce any grafs, if calculated for bear, it received one ploughing as soon after harvest as was convenient, and in spring it was spread over with a compost of old divot, sod or turf, and dung, and in the beginning of summer the lands were a second time ploughed, and sown with bear, and afterwards yearly with black oats, while it yielded any tolerable produce: if unfit for bear, it was *tautbed* in the preceding summer, or covered with the same compost as above-mentioned during the winter, and so on successively croped with oats, every following year, in manner above specified; and it was so uncommon practice, for a farmer to take 5 or 6 successive crops of oats from the same field; the reason assigned for this frequency of crops is, that the severity of the winter storms rendering it necessary for the inhabitants to house their cattle, it was expedient, by every method, to provide the means of their subsistence.

Produce.—The grain of this country, was anciently bear and black oats; and before the introduction of sheep, the country abounded in black cattle, and on them the tenants chiefly relied for payment of their rents; and we have been assured, that the number of cattle annually sold from this parish, would exceed 800. In Abertarf, from the mildness of the climate, these cattle were often disposed of early in the year; but in Stratherrick they were so reduced during the course of the winter, as not to be saleable till the months of
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August or September. But as more than three-fourths of this parish is now covered with sheep, the number of black cattle is proportionably diminished; and it may be safely computed, that there are now sold annually from this parish from 2000 to 3000 sheep and wethers. Within the last 30 years, the tenantry in general have run much upon potatoes, and in the country of Abertarf, this article of late years constitutes the principal part of their crop; and in Stratherrick, although a hilly country, every tenant and cottar has a proportion of his ground planted with this valuable root; and it should also be recorded, that two heritors of this country, having of late years been at considerable expence, in clearing their grounds of stones, levelling the same, by removing the banks or interstices, vulgarly called *merins*, which are now frequently to be seen in the unimproved part of the country, building dikes, &c. have also introduced a rotation of crops; the first by sowing turnips, following that with bear and grass-feeds; and it is to be hoped, that these successful attempts will become hereafter an object of imitation.—Mr Frazer of Gortuleg having about 4 years ago imported a species of grain called red oats, brought from the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, he has had such prosperous returns, that most of the tenants in the country, to whom he is so obliging as communicate what can be spared of the produce, now prefer this grain to the black oats used by their ancestors, as it is not only found to produce a redundant crop of straw, but to ripen as early as the native grain of the country; but it would appear from the trials made, that this grain deteriorates in two or three years trial, and therefore a triennial importation would seem proper and necessary. Mr Frazer has also inclosed several of his fields with thorn hedges, which are in a thriving condition.

The natural wood of this country is chiefly birch, allar, and hazel; but from the great trunks found in all the
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moſſes, there ſeems no doubt, that the face of the country was anciently covered with fir and oak trees. The two above-mentioned heritors, of late years, have much improved the face of that part of the country where they reſide, by large plantations of fir, larch, &c. &c.

So far as have been diſcovered, there appears to have been no minerals of any value in this country, excepting the lime-ſtone quarries on the eſtate of Foyers and Aberchalder, as already noticed.

This country, does not appear ever to have been an object, for any great man to fix his reſidence in, and therefore, we can trace no remains of any edifice worthy of obſervation. But it would be wrong to omit mentioning the celebrated fall of Foyers, which is ſituated in this pariſh, and the beautiful ride from Inverneſs to this caſcade, amidſt a ſmooth road, cut through tremendous rocks, and ſhaded by a natural hedge betwixt the ſame and Lochneſs, which, together with a variety of ſcenery preſenting itſelf amidſt the thundering noiſe of the caſcade, has frequently engaged the admiration of travellers.

The gariſon of Fort-Auguſtus, ſituated at the weſtern end of the loch, on a plain of no inconfiderable magnitude, having the river Tarf on the ſouth-eaſt, the river Oich to the weſt, and on all ſides ſurrounded with hills towering to an extravagant height, has often been admired for the variety of the landſcape; and as it lies in the centre of communication betwixt the Weſtern Iſles and the South, ſeems ſufficiently calculated for the eſtabliſhment of a market, for the ſeveral produce of theſe countries; and it is hoped, that the one lately attempted there, will, in time, prove of much public utility.

Were we to deſcribe the various glens and valleys which are to be ſeen in this pariſh, it would prove more a degree of partiality to our native country, than any benefit and amuſement

amusement to the reader. But it would have been unpardonable, to neglect giving a short description, of the productive shealling or grazing called Killin: It is totally concealed from the few strangers who are pleased to visit the inhabitants, being surrounded with hills of an immense altitude, and the access to it so rugged, as frequently to endanger the lives of infants, when transported thereto in manner above described. It is bounded on the east by a lake, from whence issues the principal river composing the Fall of Foyers; on both sides of this loch the rocks descend with such inconceivable gradation as hardly to be passable; on the north side it is so steep that it is denominated Eakin, or Necessity, implying the great difficulty of passing that way; on the south-side called Craggin, or Rocky; and notwithstanding all the attempts by the inhabitants to render it passable, it in some parts only contains a path of two or three feet in breadth; and if a horse stumbles, or is in the least affrighted, it tumbles down by a precipice into the deepest part of the lake, and melancholy instances of this kind have sometimes occurred. When we come to the end of this curious path we are struck with amazement; behold a valley covered with all species of verdure, a computed mile in length, and a half mile in breadth, bisected by a river flowing in a meandrous course, composed of a variety of streams descending from the hills at the wester end; and on all sides the ground, rising by imperceptible progression to the clouds, appears green to the very summit. To this shealling, the inhabitants, in ancient times, performed their periodical migrations in manner above described; but since the introduction of sheep, the same has been mostly detached from the former possessors, and is now principally inhabited by shepherds and their flocks.

This parish abounds in a variety of lakes, viz. Lochfaraline, Lochgarf, the two lakes of Knoky, Lochtarf, Lochkillin,

killin, &c. &c. and abound in a variety of fish, which has frequently proved the amusement, and a delicious repast, to strangers, as well as to the natives.

The manners of the inhabitants of this parish have undergone a material change within these 50 years; before that period they lived in a plain simple manner, experienced few wants, and possessed not the means, nor had any desire, of procuring any foreign commodities. If they had salt and tobacco, paid their pittance of rents, and performed their ordinary services to their superiors, and that their conduct in general met their approbation, it seemed to be the height of their ambition; but this chain of attachment having been loosed, if not dismembered, by the abolition of heritable jurisdictions, &c. which soon succeeded the lamentable troubles of the years 1745 and 1746, the better sort or principal tacksmen having become more indifferent about their inferiors, this inspired them with a spirit of independence. But though they have shaken off the prejudices of clanish chivalry, the impression of attachment to their natural superior is not totally defaced; for upon a late occasion, when their young chief had a call for men, in loyal support of his King and Constitution, it is a recent fact, that the heritors and principal tacksmen of this district held a meeting, and assessed themselves in men or money according to their several abilities: Their effort was abundantly successful, without any breach of law or good order, and their example tended much to accelerate the national levy thereby intended; and if the heritors of this country, will but persevere in treating their inferiors with the same tenderness, humanity, and sympathy, which they have hitherto experienced from the representatives of the first family in this district, we flatter ourselves, that we shall not see a final period, to this species of reciprocal sensibility, which probably, in a greater degree, is to be found among the

Aborigines of this district, than in that more eligible country in which, after quitting this parish, they establish their settlement; and were it not reckoned a digression from the subject of the present essay, we would express our admiration, to behold the attachment the natives of this country bear to their *natale solum*; that after wasting the prime of life in foreign climes, and in services honourable to themselves, and useful to their country, they limit their ideas to that domestic retirement, which has produced so many scenes of beauty and improvement, as in our visit to that district, the eyes are constantly struck with; and when we are informed, that their tenures are by no means of a permanent nature, protection, united with affability and complacency on the one hand, and implicit confidence on the other, excites our wishes that such principles were to become more general throughout the nation.

Having already observed, that in the days of old, the whole pasturage of this country, after concluding the harvest, was a species of common, we must not forbear to mention, that in modern times the practice is widely different; every tenant now-a-days is attentive to preserve his own bounds; and as the principal farms were some years ago granted under leases of 19 years endurance, with a limited obligation to recompense the tenants for certain improvements, this has produced several inclosures of various kinds; and though we cannot but admire the taste with which some of them have been executed, they have a tendency to divert the eye from the native deformity of the surface. This emboldens us to say, that if heritors in general were more liberal in their encouragement to the tenantry, and were they relieved from those fetters which their ancestors had imposed upon them, frequently beyond their abilities, that we would soon observe an exuberance of produce, and
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those scenes of beauty and urbanity, which strike us with pleasure and admiration in many improved districts of Scotland.

This parish, being situated in a part of the great opening betwixt the west and the sea, denominated of old *Glennmore-na-h'alabin*, or the *Large Glen of Caledonia*. It may not be impertinent to this subject, to notice, the evident public utility that would result, by opening a communication, by water, betwixt the *Murray Frith* at *Inverness* and the branch of the *Western Ocean* at *Fort-William*. The Author of *Nature* seems to have intended this as a practicable measure: the distance, taken in a straight direction, does not much exceed 50 miles; of this, *Lochness*, *Lochoich*, and *Lochlochy*, all fit for navigation, make up betwixt 30 and 40; and though we cannot venture to prognosticate, that the expediture of uniting these lakes would return an immediate recompense, we must beg leave to signify our belief, that the employing the excreffive wealth of this country in such operations, would, in process of time, redound more to the national advantage, than the sporting thereof in speculative schemes on transatlantic plantations, liable to the destructive inroads of *Charibs*, &c. &c.

We cannot entertain a doubt, that it must be the blame of the heritors, if the tenantry of this parish, so near to inexhaustible lime-quarries, will not, in time, imitate the successful experiments already made, of ameliorating the productive value of their several tenements. But whether this mode will be found to yield a greater revenue to the landholders than covering the whole country with flocks of sheep, is beyond our abilities to determine; but we may with confidence affirm, that this mode can alone restore the decrease of population of this country, which falls in course of our plan now to be stated.

Formerly, *Abertarf* was inhabited by the numerous and
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hardy race of the names of Macdonald, Macgruers, Kennedies, and Frafers, and some of the principal *towns* or farms possessed by gentlemen of much estimation in the country; but this part of the parish having, within these 30 years, exchanged its proprietors, it is now almost totally under sheep, and hardly contains the tenth part of its former inhabitants; and some parts of the country of Stratherrick, having been converted into sheep-walks, has considerably reduced the number of its people: So that in exhibiting the following statement, taken from a late accurate investigation, we regret much to find it considerably short of the ancient inhabitants it formerly contained. In Dr Webster's report, *anno* 1755, the number of souls is stated at 1961. The parish at present contains 378 families, but of these at least 18 are connected with the garrison of Fort-Augustus, and 70 invalids, who all live in the fort; and the number of inhabitants, (including invalids), in the whole parish, amounts only to 1741; making a decrease of 220 souls. From the number of men who have enlisted in his Majesty's service, in the course of the present war, it may be affirmed, that the proportion which the female sex, bears to that of the male, is from 3 to 2.

School.—The only source of education the inhabitants of this parish have hitherto enjoyed, was a schoolmaster established by the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, in the village of Fort-Augustus, who has had frequently from 70 to 80 and 100 scholars; but, in respect there have not hitherto been any parochial schoolmaster established in this district, that institution has lately been withdrawn; but, as we understand, that the whole heritors of this parish, are unanimous in their wish to have this defect remedied, we hope soon to see that useful appointment revived under the patronage of the Honourable Society; and it may with confidence

fidence be asserted, that no place in the north country stands more in need of such an institution. At present, such of the tenants as have ability, send their children to distant places, for the means of éducation ; but those of the poorer sort, must necessarily be void of any species of literature.

For what reason we cannot assign, but we do not find that there has been any regular baptismal register, kept in this parish, for many years past.

Rent.—The valued rent of this parish, as appears from the general valuation-book, made up in the 1691, amounts to L. 3295 : 3 : 4 Scotch ; but what the real rent of it may be, or how far the same may admit of increase, or be liable to diminution, a circumstance depending upon the present speculation of sheep-farming, is what we cannot take upon us to ascertain.

Church and Manse.—The present incumbent has a commodious manse, and a large church, which would contain the whole of the inhabitants of this parish, built and slated about 30 years ago. These underwent a late reparation, at a considerable expence to the heritors ; but, from the exposure of both these edifices to the violence of the storm, they will almost require an annual repair, for which there was a fund established at the last presbytery visitation, which, if wisely applied, may in future relieve the heritors from a great expenditure, similar to what they were lately put to.

Stipend.—So far as we can learn, the old stipend payable to the clergyman was L. 75 Sterling, including communion-elements ; but, by a late augmentation, it was increased to L. 105 Sterling, and is all payable in money, there being no victual rent in this parish. The minister has no other farm,
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in addition to his glebe, excepting a small grazing on the Lovat estate, for which he pays a moderate rent.

Character.—The inhabitants of all ranks, are very regular in their attendance on divine worship; but we regret to mention our information, that the lower set, are apt to assemble in the evening at whisky-houses: the late parliamentary prohibition to distillation, has brought about a great reformation in this respect, having almost annihilated these nuisances of retail, and we hope never again to observe, such frequent violation of morality and decency in this parish.

Heritors.—Besides the Lovat family, there are six other proprietors, each of whom possesses a separate mill; and there are three mills on the Lovat property in this parish.

Antiquity.—We do not know of any monument of antiquity worth the mentioning, excepting that, on the east confines of this parish, there is a towering hill of great altitude, and difficulty of access on all sides, which, in the Gaelic language, is called Dunardile, on the summit of which there appears the remains of an old fortification; and we are informed that a similar tower is in the same direction, contiguous to the house of Invergarry, in the parish of Kilmanivaig; and the tradition of the country is, that these hills were watch-towers for giving signals upon the approach of an enemy, which was done by large fires, composed of wood and other combustibles, and this seems to correspond with the Gaelic etymology of the appellation, *dun* signifying a hill, *ard* high, and *dyil* Carnochs, or followers of a tribe.

Police.—We cannot conclude this narrative, without observing, that though few of the heritors reside in this parish,

rish, the principal inhabitants pay great attention to the police, such as establishing constables, holding regular meetings of Justices of the Peace, for conducting and repairing the highways, &c. &c.; and though it must be acknowledged, that several mistakes are committed in forming their plans, yet, if the skill and experience of the gentlemen of this parish was equal to their patriotic zeal, no district would be better supplied with these means of public accommodation.

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